

WESLEYAN METHODISM  
IN THE  
DARLINGTON CIRCUIT;  
WITH AN  
INTRODUCTION AND AN APPENDIX,  
CONTAINING NOTICES OF  
MR. WESLEY'S EARLIEST VISITS  
TO THE 181  
CONTIGUOUS CIRCUITS,  
AND  
SEVERAL OF HIS ORIGINAL LETTERS.

BY GEORGE JACKSON,  
WESLEYAN MINISTER.

"Then had the Churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." Acts ix. 31.

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THE PROFITS TO BE GIVEN TO THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

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## PREFACE.

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THE author of the following pages has often felt sincere regret, that the interesting traditions and anecdotes of Wesleyan Methodism are being so fast consigned to oblivion, by the deaths of the pious and honoured contemporaries of Wesley; and that these have not been more frequently collected, and combined with such notices as the primitive writers on Methodism have left, and as circuit documents supply, so as to form for each of the more important circuits, a kind of local history. The following pages consist of such materials, for the purpose of supplying such a history of Wesleyan Methodism in the Darlington Circuit.

Another cause of regret has been, that those who have made our antiquities the subjects of their enquiry, have not always done so for the sole purpose of glorifying that God who has "made us a thousand times so many more as we were." Or if this have been the primary object, it has sometimes been associated with an invidious contrast of the men, the means, the labours, or the successes, of ancient and modern Methodism. Such writers, generally either pronounce a sentence or utter a prediction of condemnation, and they generally use the means to realize their maledictions. The author has no sympathy with these parties; for as their complaints occasion distrust and disunion, he believes them to be the authors of all that they profess to deplore. He cannot distrust

that system of agencies and means by which, for the last century, God has been reviving religion in our nation and the world, and saving myriads of immortal souls. With his Honor the Vice Chancellor, in the introduction to his decision in the Chancery suit of 1835, he must say, "I do not think that any question can be deemed of a trifling nature which concerns the well-being—I may say the existence—of a body such as that which is composed of Wesleyan Methodism. It is my firm belief, that to that body we are indebted for a large proportion of the religious feeling which exists among the general body of the community, not only of this country, but throughout a great proportion of the civilized world besides. When, also, I recollect, that this society owes its origin and first formation to an individual so eminently distinguished as the late John Wesley, and when I remember that, from time to time, there have arisen out of this body some of the most able and distinguished individuals that ever graced and ornamented any society whatever,—I may name one for all, the late Dr. Adam Clarke,—I must come to the conclusion, that no persons who have any proper understanding of what religion is, and regard for it, can look upon the general body of the Wesleyan Methodists without the most affectionate interest and concern."

It may appear strange that this eminent *Lawyer* should so correctly appreciate the purposes and the merits of Wesleyan Methodism, while it is being denounced by some who ought to have been more correctly informed than he. But, the fact is, he was required *as a Lawyer* to decide, whether it had been faithful to its principles, its usages, its rules, and its mission. In this decision, whatever others may do, he could not lose sight of its purely spiritual character. He remarks, "In the first place, we must consider the peculiar objects of the Methodist society. The sole and principal object of the

late John Wesley, as it appears from the Minutes of Conference, was 'to spread scriptural holiness over the land,' and by means of a society voluntarily attached to himself, to set forth such an example of unblemished holiness and humility, as could only emanate from the purest principles of the christian religion." The author of the following pages has written under a conviction, strengthened by a connection with Methodism which extends over nearly one-third of its existence, that this is the only key to its principles, its purposes, and its history. Mr. Wesley was in religion what the immortal Bacon was in philosophy,—the great *experimentalist*. Seeing how little had been accomplished by the enormous folios which had been written on speculative theology and modes of Church government, he established a Connexion of "United Societies," for the purpose of extending the experimental and practical religion which alone can save the soul. If the lapse of a century had said nothing of his success, theorists might return to speculation, but as in philosophy the God of nature has spoken, so in religion has "the God of all grace." The verdict therefore is the verdict of history, and this verdict the author has endeavoured to educe from the history of Methodism in the Darlington Circuit. But, to guard the unwary amidst such discussions as are now obtruded upon us from every quarter, and are therefore unavoidable, he has felt constrained to add a word of instruction and admonition; and he has been gratified by the opinion of one of the most judicious of those friends who have kindly read his MS., viz., that his tract, "touches on many subjects which at present need to be better understood, in such a way as ought not to offend any one." This has been his sincere endeavour, and he has tried to bring every thing to the test of the great Pauline and Wesleyan Principles:—"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." (Galatians vi. 15, 16.)

The author's first intention was to supply an article for the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, as he has done in two other circuits in which he has laboured. But he found the subject grow on his hands beyond his expectations, and he was led to hope that a separate publication would be more acceptable to our friends, and more useful to the cause which he is wishful to serve. He cannot but regret that the subject was not earlier taken up, while some were living, whose grateful hearts and tenacious memories were the depositaries of all that would have given interest to such a narrative. At a time when the Conference directed the Superintendents of Circuits to this subject—in 1823—the Rev. D. Rogers was commencing his enquiries here, but in a few months he was suddenly called to his reward; and since, those who could have supplied materials, which are now for ever lost, have followed him. It is hoped, however, that what is here supplied, will revive and perpetuate such recollections as may be gratifying to the juvenile part of the Wesleyan Societies in this Circuit, and lead them more powerfully to feel the responsibility devolved upon them by their connexion with that society whose history is here but imperfectly sketched. In this hope, the author humbly and prayerfully commits his labours to the charitable judgment of men, and to the special blessing of God.

*Wesley Place, Darlington,*

*April 12th, 1850.*



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# WESLEYAN METHODISM

IN THE

DARLINGTON CIRCUIT.

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## INTRODUCTION.

CONTENTS.—ANTIQUITY.—HISTORIANS.—SOUTHEY ON THE STATE OF THE NATION WHEN WESLEY COMMENCED HIS CAREER.—MACAULAY ON THE STATE OF THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.—BERNARD GILPIN.—METHODISM INTRODUCED INTO THE NORTH.

IN both a personal and social sense, there is something truly gratifying to those who have partaken of the saving inspirations of our holy religion, to review the wonderful things which the Lord did in "the days of their Fathers," as well as "in the old times before them." The reverence for what is antiquated is inherent in human nature; and there are those, we fear, who indulge this feeling, in guilty, though in opposite directions. Some, after the most obvious proofs that God has forsaken the temple, and Ichabod is written by His judicial finger upon its doors, sit down in an indolent and semi-idolatrous admiration, amidst the dust and ruins of all that ought to render a temple dear to man; and are rather infected and chilled by those damps of death by which they are surrounded, than roused to penitence, prayer, and exertion, for the revival of its ancient glory. To glory in the Temple, or even in the Ark, after sin has provoked the holy God to forsake them, is a sinful and fatal delusion. But there is another class of antiquarian worshippers; and as Methodism has become the religion of history, it has furnished its devotees of this description. Some of them sigh in seclusion, for the return of all that they consider as primitive, and a few have spread discontent by their writings and their murmurings. These authors seize eagerly on what is eccentric, (which existed only as an exception, and perhaps was neither useful nor honourable;) and while they review the past with a just admiration of the magnanimity which spiritual religion only could supply, and which

enabled our predecessors to triumph under circumstances of cruel persecution; because the present times do not in the same degree call for the exercise of the same virtues, they are all but incessant in their complaints that, "the former days were better than these." Some we believe sigh for a return of those primitive showers of addled eggs and brick-bats, which greeted our fathers in their early labours, who would probably be the first to flee before them. Religion, however, is progressive; and it might be expected in the course of a century, without its suffering any deterioration in its spiritual and saving efficiency, to unnerve the arm of the hardened persecutor; to place its disciples in circumstances of comparative comfort; and to leave to its ministers a freer course, that the word of God might run and be glorified. It was natural, too, that its spirit of liberality should supersede the hayloft and the cockpit—those primitive places of Wesleyan Worship—by a decent, or perhaps an elegant place of worship; and place its ministers beyond the necessity of "going from house to house," in opposition to scriptural injunction, to receive, if not to beg, their daily bread. [See Luke x. 7.]

Methodism has existed during a term of years, extending backwards, over one-third of the existence of the churches of the Protestant Reformation. It was originated by those, who, both friends and foes confess were correct in their conclusions, that *their* Protestant Church had proved faithless to her duties and obligations; and that, as a consequence, infidelity amongst the learned, indifference amongst the middle classes, brutishness amongst the lower orders, and immorality amongst all, called for special efforts on the part of man, and special providences and influences on the part of God, for the revival of true religion. Historians very generally occupy a position so anomalous in regard to evangelical religion, that we can scarcely tell how to class them; whether we are to regard them as its friends or its foes. This is the position in which we are compelled to view two of the most celebrated of modern authors: we refer to Messrs. SOUTHEY and MACAULAY. Amidst many things in the writings of the former, which have justly been deplored and denounced, he has recorded his convictions that, at the time the Wesleys and their honoured coadjutors commenced their immortal career, the state of the nation was such as is here described: nay, he does more; he acknowledges the hand of God in their mission and success. "No fear of misrepresentation, or of obloquy," says he, "shall ever deter me

from declaring my belief that WESLEY and WHITFIELD were chosen instruments in the hands of Providence, in giving a greater impulse to religious feeling when it was most needed. It was a time of great degeneracy, in very many important points. The manners of high life, were not indeed so absolutely profligate as in the infamous days of Charles II., but there was a greater degree of general coarseness. Drunkenness had become as much a national vice among the gentry, as it was among the Germans. The learning which the universities imparted was still orthodox,—but there was little of it; and considering them as schools of morals, the course of life there was better adapted to graduate young men in the\* brutalizing habits of the society wherewith they were going to mingle, than to qualify them for reforming it. The Church, therefore, was only ill supplied with Ministers; its higher preferments were bestowed with more reference to political connexions than to individual desert; and there never was less of religious feeling, either within the Establishment or without, than when WESLEY blew his trumpet, and awakened those who slept."

This testimony refers to the nation as a whole; and it is from a source which is truly unexceptionable. Mr. MACAULAY speaks in all but raptures, of the change which two centuries have witnessed in our beloved country, and especially of the improvements of the last century. He would probably be less disposed than Mr. SOUTHEY, to attribute it to the influence of Methodism, even in its reflex influence on the brutish population of the rural and mining districts, which were selected as the first objects of its benevolent mission. He is more disposed to attribute the change to those arts of peace which followed the cessation of the civil wars, and the Revolution of 1688. He will, however, be the more trustworthy authority as to the state of that part of the country which, in the labors of our forefathers, first embraced Darlington on its "Round." Though now the head of an important circuit, it was regarded by them as secondary, and for some years it was only occasionally visited, *en passant*, by Mr. W. and his helpers, in their eagerness to serve the degraded beings who dug out the mineral wealth which lay hid in the dales of the northern counties of Yorkshire, Westmoreland, Durham, Cumberland, and Northumberland.

\* See Appendix, No. 1.

"The increase of the people has been great," says Mr. Macaulay, "in every part of the kingdom, but generally much greater in the northern than the southern shires. In truth a large part of the country beyond the Trent, was, down to the eighteenth century, in a state of barbarism. Before the union of the two British crowns, and long after that union, there was as great a difference between Middlesex and Northumberland as there now is, between Massachusetts and the settlements of those squatters who, far west of the Mississippi, administer a rude justice with the rifle and the dagger. In the reign of Charles II., the traces left by ages of slaughter and pillage were still perceptible, many miles south of the Tweed, in the face of the country and in the lawless manners of the people. There was still a large class of moss-troopers, whose calling was to plunder dwellings, and drive away whole herds of cattle. It was found necessary, soon after the Restoration, to enact laws of great severity for the prevention of these outrages. The magistrates of Northumberland and Cumberland were authorised to raise bands of armed men for the defence of property and order; and provision was made for meeting the expense of these levies by local taxation. The parishes were required to keep bloodhounds for the purpose of hunting the freebooters. Many old men who were living in the middle of the eighteenth century could well remember the time when these ferocious dogs were common. Yet, even with such auxiliaries, it was found impossible to track the robbers to their retreats among the hills and morasses. For the geography of that wild country was very imperfectly known. Even after the accession of George III., the path over the hills from Borrowdale to Ravenglass was still a secret, kept by the dalesmen, some of whom, had probably in their youth escaped from the pursuit of justice, by that road. The seats of the gentry and the larger farmhouses were fortified. Oxen were penned at night beneath the overhanging battlements of the residence, which was known by the name of the Peel. The inmates slept with arms at their sides. Huge stones and boiling water were in readiness to crush and scald the plunderers who might venture to assail the little garrison. No traveller ventured into that country without making his will. The judges on circuit, with the whole body of barristers, attorneys, clerks, and serving men, rode on horseback from Newcastle to Carlisle, armed, and escorted by a strong guard under the command of the sheriffs. It was necessary to carry provisions,

for the country was a wilderness, which afforded no supplies. The spot where the cavalcade halted to dine, under an immense oak, is not yet forgotten. The irregular vigour with which criminal justice was administered, shocked observers whose life had been passed in more tranquil districts. Juries, animated by hatred, and by a sense of common danger, convicted house-breakers and cattle-stealers with the promptitude of a court martial in a mutiny; and the convicts were hurried by scores to the gallows. Within the memory of some whom this generation has seen, the sportsman who wandered in pursuit of game to the sources of the Tyne, found the heaths round Keeldar Castle peopled by a race scarcely less savage than the Indians of California, and heard with surprise the half naked women chaunting a wild measure, while the men with brandished dirks danced a war dance."\* Hist. Eng., Vol. I., pp. 184—86.

This distressing statement of the morals of the North, leads one as naturally as fruitlessly, to enquire for the results of the labours of the learned, the pious, the laborious, and the philanthropic, Bernard Gilpin, the Protestant "*Apostle of the North*," who from 1558 to 1583, was the Rector of Haughton-le-Spring.† As far as spiritual religion was concerned, he seems to have had but little posthumous influence; and his charities, even, have been diverted from the channel in which he intended them to flow. From the labours of such a man, we might have expected "a godly seed" to survive, but it was awfully otherwise. The period embraced in the latter part of this account, is that in which the Wesleys made their commencement in the South and West of England. The formation of the first class in London, which was the first concentration of their labours, bears date twenty-one years before George III. ascended the throne. No one even at that time, regarded the existing ministerial agency as equal to the wants of such a population as has been above described. The extraordinary labours of Mr. W. and his coadjutors, became the subject of conversation amongst all ranks; and the court-flatterers even, were not sparing in their reports and censures. One of these gentlemen is said to have reported what he had heard of their ubiquitous proceedings, and fanatical opinions, to George II.; and to have concluded his tirade of gossip by assuring his Majesty that they were mad. A biting sarcasm, however, from

\* See also Mr. Wesley's Journal, June 17th, 1782.

† See Appendix, No. 2.

his royal master, closed the conversation, which shewed his Majesty's opinion of their labours, and of the despair he felt of help from a higher quarter. "*I sincerely wish,*" his majesty replied, "*they would bite my Bishops.*"\*

It was not likely that such barbarous sprigs of orthodoxy, as according to Southey, the Universities were sending forth, would make any spiritual impression on such a population as both he and Mr. Macaulay have described. Mr. Wesley, and his coadjutors found the clergy everywhere giving their countenance to the barbarous sports of the objects of their benevolent mission, and at the head of the mobs by which it was intended to bring it to a close. Mr. Wesley looked upon his country with some such feelings as those experienced by the pious and patriotic Ezekiel, when he was led to survey the emblematical valley of dry bones. He was already in the ministry before he had experienced the converting grace of God; but then with all the ardour of his first love, like Melancthon before him, he hoped that, while he prophesied and God breathed upon these slain, the signs of returning life might be hailed by many of the clergy, and they would become his zealous coadjutors. He was soon undeceived, however, and was compelled to abandon them as "a rope of sand." They were inaccessible alike to the necessities of their fellow-creatures, whose pastors they were; to the infection of his zeal; and to the power of his faithful and kind "Appeals," and his more friendly letters to those of whose willing assistance he entertained some hope. He was everywhere treated, with but very few personal exceptions, as a doubtful friend, or an open enemy, of the Establishment. The little of evangelical religion which existed, and even some of that which Methodism had originated—as in the case of Mr. Whitfield—existed in connexion with Calvinism, and swelled the tide of prejudice against him. He had to abandon the hope of Clerical help in general; and not only to continue his work in spite of their opposition, but to originate the agency by which it was to be effected. He had seen enough of college training to despise it as supplying the means for a work so mighty; he had read enough of ecclesiastical controversy to see that its distractions and passions rather defeated than assisted the work of real conversion; he had felt and seen enough of the spiritual principles of evangelical religion when faithfully

\* See also, "*Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon.*" Vol. 1. pp. 38, 67.



preached by man, and graciously blessed of God, to trust them as the sole means of success. Many of his earliest triumphs were amongst the semi-savage colliers of Kingswood, and he was soon found amongst their dirty and degraded fellow-countrymen in the North. Were History to be written on proper principles—for the purpose of "*Seeing God in History*"—Mr. Wesley's first visit to the North would be regarded as an epoch in the history of the race whose degradation has above been so graphically described, and of the nation to which their industry was but a trifling counterbalance, to their barbarous immoralities. But it is not thus, in general, that the learned write history. Mr. Wesley's first visit to the North was to Newcastle; which under date of Friday, May 28th, 1742, he thus records:—

"We came to Newcastle about six, and after a short refreshment, walked into the town. I was surprised: so much drunkenness, cursing, and swearing, (even from the mouths of little children) do I never remember to have seen and heard before, in so small a compass of time. Surely this people is ripe for him, who *came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.*"

"Sunday 30, at seven I walked down to Sandgate, the poorest and most contemptible part of the town, and standing at the end of the street with John Taylor, began to sing the hundredth psalm. Three or four people came out to see what was the matter, who soon increased to four or five hundred. I suppose there might be twelve or fifteen hundred before I had done preaching: to whom I applied these words, "*He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.*" Observing the people when I had done, to stand gaping and staring upon me, with the most profound astonishment, I told them, "If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again."

"At five, the hill on which I designed to preach, was covered from the top to the bottom. I never saw so large a number of people together, either in Moorfields, or at Kennington-Common. I knew it was not possible for the one half to hear, although my voice was then strong and clear, and I stood so as to have them all in view, as they were ranged on the side of the hill. The word of God which I set before them was, *I will heal their backsliding, and love them freely.* After

preaching, the poor people were ready to tread me under foot out of pure love and kindness. It was sometime before I could possibly get out of the press. I then went back another way than I came. But several were got to our inn before me; by whom I was vehemently importuned to stay with them, at least a few days; or, however, one day more. But I could not consent; having given my word to be at Birstal, with God's leave on Tuesday night." He had gone from Birstal to Newcastle.

## CHAPTER I.

CONTENTS.—MR. WESLEY'S COADJUTORS.—"THE DALES" CIRCUIT.—BARNARD CASTLE.—PERSECUTIONS.—PLACES IN THE DALES CIRCUIT.—DANGERS IN TRAVELLING.—YARM.—MR. WESLEY VISITS DARLINGTON BUT DOES NOT PREACH.

Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors had not preached long in the North before some of those were converted who became his most successful helpers in the salvation of others. One of the first of these was Christopher Hopper. He informs us, that in his youth, "he spent nights and days together in hunting, cocking, card-playing, horse-races, or whatever the devil brought to town or country:" and that "gentlemen, clergymen, mechanics, and peasants, made up the crowd" of witnesses. He was converted to God in 1743; was made a leader by Mr. Wesley, and soon began to preach. He informs us that, "laymen and ecclesiastics joined heart and hand to suppress these pestilent fellows; not with acts of kindness, scripture, or reason; but invectives and lies, dirt, rotten eggs, brickbats, stones, and cudgels: these were satan's arguments in vindication of his cause. It was the common cry in town and country, 'press them for soldiers; send them on board a man-of-war; transport them; send them to prison, or knock out their brains, and despatch them at once; for there is no law for them.' This was a great mistake: there was law for us; but we could not find a magistrate who had courage or honesty enough to put it in force." In 1747, he was regularly called into the work of the ministry; lived a life of pre-eminent usefulness; and in 1802, finished his course. In the first year of his ministry he laboured in his own vicinity, and was the means of converting another who became eminently useful: this was Jacob Rowell. "He was either going to, or

returning from, a cock-fight, when he espied a crowd surrounding the apostolic Hopper, who was delivering his message in the open air. Attracted by the unusual sight, he drew near to the skirts of the congregation, and standing with his bag thrown over his shoulder, an arrow of conviction pierced his heart."\* It is said that such was the absorbing attention with which he heard, that his hand gradually relaxed its hold of the bag containing the game-cock, and it fell at his feet. This was the turning point in his life; and in 1749, he was called into the work of the ministry, and died in 1784. Mr. Wesley's entry in the Minutes of the Conference respecting him is, "a faithful old soldier, fairly worn out in his Master's service."

"The Dales," to which circuit Darlington first belonged, and which is mentioned as a circuit on the Minutes of 1749, (in the first record of circuits,) was at this time invaded by Methodist agency both from the north and the south. Mr. Rowell followed nobly in the tract of his spiritual father from the north; and from the south came "one Joseph Cheeseborough, a shoemaker and a methodist, from Leeds: who having received the truth himself, was willing to impart it to others; not by preaching or exhortation, but by friendly discourse with his former acquaintance, for he was a Barnard-Castle man. Joseph Garnet (subsequently received as one of Mr. Wesley's "Helpers," in 1768, and who died in 1773) and a few others, first received the truth." This account is extracted from the "Life of Mr. Thomas Hanby, who was brought to God in Barnard-Castle; in 1754 was called into the ministry; became so eminent in the connexion, that in 1794, he was elected President of the Conference; and died in 1796.† Mr. Whitford was the first regular preacher that came into the circuit, and of him and his successors Mr. H. says, "After Mr. Whitford, we were favoured with Mr Tucker, Mr. Turnough, Mr. John Fenwick, Mr. Rowell, and others; who often preached to us while the blood run down their faces, by the blows and pointed arrows thrown at them while they were preaching. Soon after, you, [Mr. Wesley] sir, paid us a visit., but were interrupted by the fire-engines being played on the audience. I, and our few friends, did all we could to prevent it, but were overpowered by the multitude." This was in 1752.

This was before Mr. Wesley had made it a rule that no

\* Wes. Meth. Mag., 1843, p. 907.

† See Appendix, No. 3.

Methodist preacher should follow any trade; and Mr. Rowell's wife lived in Barnard-Castle, and kept a shop, while he travelled "The Round." My friend Mr. Anthony Steele, of Barnard-Castle, is in possession of his private Memorandum Book; which contains all the entries incident to both the worldly and sacred calling of this eminently holy and useful minister of God. One of the most interesting entries, is, a list of subscribers to a projected Library, containing upwards of one hundred names, with his own honoured name at the head of the list. What benefactors must such men have been to such a population as Mr. Macaulay has described; preaching the truth as it is in Jesus, in the open air or in a chapel, or as Mr. Hopper says, "in private houses, ale-houses, cock-pits, or wherever they could find an open door;" begging money of the rich to buy books for the poor," as the Minutes of the Conference enjoined; and thus establishing Libraries amongst them!

Mr. Rowell's Memorandum Book contains the earliest entry of the places in the Dales' Circuit, and we shall here give them in the order in which they stand, with the numbers and quarterly contributions attached:—

Michaelmas Quarter, 1759.

	Nos.	£.	s.	d.
West Sheld .....	18	0	5	0
Hexham.....	22	0	6	6
Weardale .....	35	0	9	0
West Pits.....		0	6	0
Stanemoor .....	10	0	4	6
Swaledale.....	27	0	7	6
Richmond.....	23	0	4	6
Neusam .....	14	0	5	0
Harkn. Dale.....	13	0	5	6
Lune.....	12	0	4	0
Teasdale.....	58	1	0	0
Barnd. Castle .....	65	1	0	0
Alstone.....	27	0	5	6
W. Alendale.....	19	0	10	0
E. Alendale.....	45	0	10	6
	<u>388</u>	<u>£6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>

This list will shew the extent of the circuit at this date: the orthography is the same as in the Book. The birth-place

of Mr. Jacob Rowell, was Low Mill, in Allendale; and of course he might be considered as much at home in this circuit as any one; but in crossing what Mr. Hopper calls "the quagmires and enormous mountains," even he was obliged to have a guide. In an old Society Book at Newbiggin, is the following entry:—"For Jacob before crossing Fell, 6d." This is supposed to be Jacob Rowell, and that an allowance of sixpence, and sometimes ninepence, was granted to the preachers, to hire a guide to conduct them over the Fell. This would be one of Mr. Macaulay's "Dalesmen."

It will be seen that Darlington is not on the list of places in the Dales' Circuit from Mr. Rowell's Book: but it is found on the first page of the oldest Circuit Book that exists, and which is dated Christmas, 1765. Here Barnard Castle is placed at the head; but as long as Mr. Wesley lived it was printed "The Dales" in the minutes: the year after his death, it is printed,\* "Barnard Castle." The same remarks are applicable to Yarm. Stockton was made the head of the circuit the year after Mr. Wesley's death; but Yarm and the Dales were favorite names with him: they marked the places where the work of God, in these parts, first commenced; and with parental fondness, so long as he lived, he clung to them as the symbols of his success amongst those who were the earliest objects of his successful mission. On his road from Leeds to Newcastle in 1743, and again in 1744, he preached at Wesley;† in 1749, the Dales were formed into a circuit and placed on the minutes; and he did not preach at Barnard Castle until 1752. It was only locally, then, and as the place of residence for the preacher, that Barnard Castle was considered as the circuit-town; and from Yarm, or from the Dales, all the circuits from Leeds and York on the south, to Newcastle on the North, must be grateful to trace their descent. These were the mother-churches.‡

Mr. Wesley passed through Darlington twice in 1743, and once in 1745, but he did not preach: he only visited it on his route from north to south. The following circumstance is worthy of notice. On the 18th of July 1743, he writes,—

"I set out from Newcastle with John Downes of Horseley. We were four hours riding to Ferry-Hill, about twenty miles. after resting there an hour, we rode softly on, and at two came

\* See Appendix, No. 4.

† See Appendix, No. 5.

‡ See Appendix, No. 6.

to Darlington. I thought my horse was not well. He thought the same of his; though they were both young, and very well the day before. We ordered the hostler to fetch a farrier, which he did without delay, but, before the man could determine what was the matter, both the horses lay down and died." There must have been foul-play here.

## CHAPTER II.

CONTENTS.—DARLINGTON.—JOHN NELSON PASSES THROUGH WITH THE ARMY TO THE NORTH.—INTRODUCTION OF METHODISM INTO POTTO, BY AN ITINERANT CARDER AND SPINNER.—MR. AND MRS. MOON.—MESSRS. JOHN UNTHANK AND JOHN MAC GOWAN.—MAC GOWAN ONE OF THE REBEL ARMY.—THEIR CONVERSION.—METHODISM INTRODUCED BY THEM INTO DARLINGTON.—MRS. HOSMER AND FAMILY.—YOUNG HOSMER'S CONVERSION.—MAC GOWAN BECOMES A BAPTIST MINISTER.—THE AUTHOR OF "THE SHAVER," ETC.—MR. HOSMER ONE OF MR. WESLEY'S PREACHERS.

Darlington is an important town where trade and manufactures have long been carried on with spirit and success. It is pleasantly situated on the Skerne, in the ward and deanery to which it gives its name, and in the county of Durham. It is 18 miles S. of Durham, 11 miles W. S. W. of Stockton, 16 miles E. S. E. of Barnard Castle, 12 miles N. West of Richmond, and 236 N. N. W. of London. At the commencement of this century it contained in the parish a population of 5,349, and in 1841, 11,877. It is now reached from London by Railway, in ten or eleven hours, but before these facilities were afforded, it was visited from thence at no small cost of money, sleep, and fatigue. But being on the great north road to Scotland, it was not likely to be long neglected by the extraordinary men of those times, in the midst of those extraordinary providences to which they were called to submit. Attention was first directed to Methodism in Darlington, in 1744, by the celebrated John Nelson; who, with others of the early preachers, was seized, as Mr. Wesley expresses it, and sent into the army, "and constrained to dwell among lions, for no other crime, either committed or pretended, than that of calling sinners to repentance." In Nelson's Journal is the following entry, in June, 1744, on his march to the north.

"Next morning at one, the drum beat for us to march, (from Northallerton) and we got to Darlington by nine. Here I was known to several, and by them made known to almost all the town. Many came to my quarters to talk with me, and others sent for me. Whence this famine in the land? I find the people hunger after the word, as if there were no Bibles in the nation."

"We rested here on the Sunday, and I had many to see me. When they heard what our doctrine was, they cried, 'It is a shame to send a man for a soldier for speaking the truth: for let all men say what they will, this is the gospel of Jesus Christ.' "

"In the evening, one of the officers came to me, and said, 'well sir, why were you not at church to-day?' I answered, 'I was, sir; and if you had been there, you might have seen me; for I never miss going when I have an opportunity.' 'Well, sir,' he added, 'have you preached since you came hither?' 'Not publicly yet,' I replied. He swore he wished I would, that he might punish me severely. 'But, sir,' I told him, 'if you do not leave off that habit of swearing, you will be worse punished than you are able to punish me.' He replied, 'I will make you mind your firelock, and leave off your preaching.' 'Yes, sir,' I answered, 'when I leave off speaking.' This was he that put me in prison at York, for preaching."

As the regiment "got to Durham by nine on Monday," it is not probable that he preached publicly, in Darlington.

We have seen that Darlington was first attached to the "Dales," and then to the Yarm circuit, and it was visited from the Yarm circuit, twenty years before it was formally attached. And here it may be proper to notice the origin of Methodism in the vicinity from which it was invaded by the piety, and courage, and zeal, of those days. This was by a poor female, who was not the most hopeful missionary; and at a village called Potto, now in the Stokesley circuit: the circumstances were these. The clothing of the farmers in those days, was a kind of home-made linsey-woolsey; made of linen and of the coarse wool cut from the sheep in the spring of the year, before they are shorn, and which is known by the name of "doddings." This was washed and prepared by the farmers, and carded and spun by itinerants, who visited the farm houses transiently for this purpose, in the spring of the year. An old woman who from necessity must be nameless—but her record is on high—and



who came on this errand from the West Riding of Yorkshire, between one of these annual visits, had come in contact with John Nelson at Birstal. The result was, that she became soundly converted to God; and happy in her "first love," and zealous for his glory, she paid her annual visit to Potto. One of the houses where she had to ply her humble task, was that of a Mr. Moon, to whose amiable and clever wife, she related "what God had done for her soul." The effect was powerful; Mrs. M. regarded her as an ambassador of truth and mercy, and she received her message accordingly. This led to the introduction of Methodism into the family; Mr. M. went to Newcastle to hear Mr. Wesley, and invited him to come, or send them a preacher; and Mrs. M. became one of his most able and valued correspondents. Methodism was thus introduced into Osmotherley, Potto, Hutton-Rudby, &c.; and eventually into those towns which, since, have become the heads of circuits, and which have fostered these mother churches with filial affection and care. This must have been early in the history of Methodism; for Mr. Wesley preached at Osmotherley in 1745, and at Stockton and Yarm, in 1748.

Darlington was first visited from this quarter. There lived at a place called Billingham, near Stockton, a farmer of the name of Unthank, whose sister resolved to go and hear the methodists. Her family highly disapproved of this resolve; and she engaged her brother to go, and bring his report of the sermon. He did so, and it would seem, he was rather confounded than convinced. He resolved to go again; and on this occasion he was deeply convinced of sin, and eventually converted to God. Other members of the family were soon made "partakers of like precious faith," and after severe exercises of mind, he, on the advice of Mr. Wesley and others, became a useful and acceptable local preacher. There lived at a place called Norton, a John Mac Gowan, whose history must be briefly detailed. He was one of two sons of a prosperous baker, in the city of Edinburgh; and John was intended for a minister in the church of Scotland, and his brother for the bar; they were put to be educated accordingly. But John's principles were awfully at variance with the purposes of his father; by a course of prodigality, he soon reduced himself to wretchedness; and asking money of his mother under pretence of visiting a relative, he left his home never more to return. He soon exhausted his resources—for he was a gambler, and a spendthrift—and this being just when the Pre-



tender was invading Scotland, he joined the rebel army, and fought at the battle of Culloden. The loss of this battle reduced him to great extremities; but as he had fought in coloured clothes he could soon disencumber himself of the evidences of his participation in the rebellion. He threw away his arms and belts, and prepared to fly. In order to provide for his present wants, he plundered the slain of their money and valuables; to hide himself from apprehension, he crossed the border, and came to Durham; and to provide for his future wants, he put himself apprentice to a linen-weaver. When he had served his apprenticeship, he went to Norton to work as a journeyman. This brought him into contact with Mr. Unthank. They met one Sunday, as each was going to Stockton to attend his place of worship; and as Mr. U. said he never dined on the Lord's-day in order that he might attend both services, it was agreed that they should accompany each other to their respective places of worship. On the way, Mac Gowan was surprised at the knowledge and experience of his new friend, and asked him where he had obtained the views which had led to results so truly enviable; and on being informed, "amongst the Methodists," he pronounced this to be impossible, for they were he said a very ignorant people. But on hearing for himself, on his return home, he declared his astonishment at the extensive knowledge of the preacher, and his ardent desire to go again on the first opportunity. This he did; was deeply humbled on account of his sin; sought and found mercy; joined the society; and eventually became an excellent local preacher. They now were true-yoke-fellows, and yearned for the extension of the gospel which they had thus received in the love thereof.

They had heard of Darlington having been once visited by a passing methodist preacher, and of a widow lady of the name of Hosmer, formerly a Moravian in the county of Kent, who had removed to Darlington with a daughter, and a son who was there apprenticed to be a chemist. On Whit-Tuesday, therefore, in the year 1753, they resolved to visit Darlington; and having heard that Mrs. Hosmer was wishful to introduce Methodism, they "sought her out, and found her." While there, her son, a very gay youth, came into the house with a ticket for the theatre, to dress for the occasion. But he was drawn into conversation, and eventually into controversy, with Messrs. Unthank and Mac Gowan. The latter, though he had gained experimental godliness amongst the Methodists, held

to his calvinistic opinions, as a Scotch Presbyterian; but though an able man, and a thorough polemic, he was foiled in argument by this gay and giddy youth. Mr. U. avowed opposite sentiments, of which the youth approved; but he thought him needlessly strict in pressing their personal and experimental application. The visitors had resolved on holding a meeting in the evening, and it was decided that Mr. U. should preach. Mrs. H. procured a room in the house of a Mr. Oswald, a currier, in Clay Row, and her daughter pressed young Hosmer to attend, but he pleaded his intention to attend the theatre, and set off for that purpose. On the way however he relented; tore up his ticket in the street; and went to the house where the preaching was to be. His pride would not let him sit in the same room, but he went into an adjoining one, and locked himself in. He could hear the sermon, and it proved to him "the savour of life unto life." When Messrs. U. and Mac G. found him, he was bathed in tears of penitence, and they joined in prayer for his salvation. Whether he then obtained mercy is not known; but the whole family joined in entreaties that the preachers would visit them again the next week; which they did, and after preaching, they formed those into a class who had been brought to decision. Of this class Mr. U. became the leader; and he and his friend Mac G., came in company from near Stockton, to meet it every other week; and on the alternate week, they wrote and sent an address to be read in the class, as a substitute for their personal attendance. This was the introduction of Methodism into Darlington, and this was the class which, until it was augmented by a revival in the year 1776, consisted only of nine members, but by this was increased to seventy. See an extract from Mr. Wesley's Journal in the following chapter.

It will be interesting as far as we can, to follow these parties. The family of Mr. and Mrs. Moon continued faithful, and some of the most interesting entries in Mr. Wesley's Journal, refer to his visits to Potto. Several of Mrs. M's letters exist in the fourth volume of the Arminian Magazine; and shew her to have been a lady of a truly intelligent mind, and devout spirit. One of her descendants at least still survives, and is now one of the circuit stewards of the Stokesley circuit.

Mr. Unthank held on his way, and was an eminently holy and useful man; and "after he had served his generation by the will of God he fell on sleep," in the year 1822, in the 93d

year of his age. An excellent grandson survives, who was many years a local preacher in this circuit, but now resides in in Middlesbrough. To him we are indebted for this part of our narrative, which he often heard his grandfather repeat.

Mac Gowan being a calvinist, could scarcely be expected to keep his standing amongst Mr. Wesley's teachers, and finally he was reluctantly expelled. At this he was greatly distressed; but he engaged as pastor to a small baptist congregation, at Bridgenorth, in Shropshire; and he subsequently removed to London, where he was very popular both as a preacher and an author. Indeed, this was no other than the author of the celebrated "Satyrical Sermon" called "The Shaver." Mr. Myles, in his Chronological History of Methodism, says, it "greatly furthered the cause of methodism, and removed the prejudice which many had against lay-preachers." His account is as follows, in "a letter from Oxford":—"On Friday last, (March 9th, 1768,) six students belonging to Edmund Hall, were expelled the University, after an hearing of several hours, before Mr. Vice-Chancellor, and some of the Heads of Houses, for holding Methodistical tenets, and taking upon them to pray, read, and expound the scriptures, and sing hymns in a private house. The principal of the College the Rev. Dr. Dixon, defended their doctrine from the thirty-nine Articles, of the Established Church, and spoke in the highest terms of the piety and the exemplariness, of their lives; but his motion was over-ruled, and sentence pronounced against them. Dr. Dixon, one of the Heads of Houses present, observed, that as these six gentlemen were expelled for having too much religion, it would be very proper to enquire into the conduct of some, who had too little. And Mr. Vice-Chancellor was heard to tell their chief accuser, that the University was obliged to him for his good work."

"The following are the names of the young men: James Matthews, Thomas Jones, Joseph Shipman, Benjamin Kay, Erasmus Middleton, and Thomas Grove. For the crimes above-mentioned, We, 'say the Vice-Chancellor, &c.,' deem each of them worthy of being expelled the Hall: I, therefore, by my visitorial power, do hereby pronounce them expelled." (St. James' Chronicle, March 17th, 1768.)

Of the Hosmer family, nothing can now be learned; but the youth above named held fast his integrity; became the leader of the class; and in 1758, one of Mr. Wesley's preachers: though owing to his health having failed, he was obliged to abandon the itinerancy in 1770.

## CHAPTER III.

CONTENTS.—FIRST PLACE OF WORSHIP IN DARLINGTON.—MR. WESLEY FIRST PREACHES IN DARLINGTON.—MR. STORY'S VISIT.—DARLINGTON UNITED TO YARM.—INCREASE OF THE SOCIETY.—FIRST SOCIETY BOOK.—SECOND PLACE OF WORSHIP.—FIRST CHAPEL.—MR. WESLEY PREACHES IN THE MARKET-PLACE.—SYSTEM OF FINANCE.—MR. WESLEY VISITS DARLINGTON IN 1780.—CHAPEL ENLARGED AND RE-OPENED BY MR. WESLEY.

MANY things conspired to consign methodism in its infancy, to a cradle as humble as that which sheltered the head of the Lord of glory. A hay-loft in Yarm, and a cottage in Darlington, preceded those comfortable, or elegant places, which now mark the success of methodism, and provide accommodation for its increased congregations. We have shewn how methodism was taken to Mr. Oswald's house, and this led to the setting apart of a vacant cottage on his property for preaching. The first place of Wesleyan worship then in Darlington was, a small thatched cottage, with a mud floor, in Clay-Row. It is still remembered by a few who in boyhood frequented it, for the purpose of playing off those boyish pranks which formed the juvenile contributions to that torrent of persecution which assailed the founders of methodism. Mr. Middleton's house now occupies the ground then occupied by this first tabernacle. It was so low that the youthful persecutors could easily help each other on the thatch, to practise their tricks on the roof, or down the chimney; and one who is now 85, well remembers "Michael Gingels" the original beadle of methodism, carrying the pulpit to the next place of worship, and joining in the derisive shout to see him with it on his back.

Mr. Wesley first preached in Darlington, on Friday, June 19th, 1761. The entry is as follows:—

"It was hard work to ride eight miles, so called, in two hours and a half; the rain beating upon us, and the by-road being exceeding slippery; but we forgot all this when we came to the Grange, so greatly was God present with his people. Thence we rode to Darlington. Here we were under a difficulty again. Not half the people could come in, and the rain forbade my preaching without; but at one (the hour of preaching) the rain stopped, and did not begin again till past two: so the people stood very conveniently in the yard; and many did not care to go away. When I went in, they crowded to the door and windows, and stayed till I took horse.

At seven I preached at Yarm, and desired one of our brethren to take my place in the morning."

At this time, Darlington was in the "Dales' Circuit," and we find mention of this house in the memoir of Mr. George Story, as follows:—"In the latter end of February, 1763, I went into the Dales' circuit. When I got to Darlington, the town was in an uproar, occasioned by George Bell's prophecy. That day, according to his prediction, the world was to be destroyed. Many people were much frightened; but their fears soon gave place to resentment, and they threatened to pull down the house, and burn the first preacher that came. However, considering that God was all-sufficient, I told Mrs. Oswald, if she would venture the house, I would venture myself. Notice being given for preaching, the place was soon filled with people rude enough. Providentially, I found in the Newcastle paper a paragraph, wherein Mr. Wesley disavowed all connexion with Mr. Bell, and all credit in his prophecy. This I read to the people, which instantly quieted them."

Of the circuit known in the Minutes of the Conference as "The Dales," Barnard Castle claims to have been considered as the head. In the Barnard Castle circuit book the only entries respecting Darlington are financial. From Michaelmas 1766, to Lady-day 1771, it occupies a single line, to record a quarterly contribution varying from 17s. to 6s. At Midsummer in that year, 1s. only was contributed, and the place is lost. In that year, the Dales' circuit contained 874 members of the methodist society. In 1773, Darlington occupies the same position in the\* Yarm circuit book; when, for the year, the contributions are successively, 8s., 14s. 6d., 15s., 15s. The place of worship was small; ministerial visits were limited; and Darlington was regarded as a mere appendage to those rural and mining districts which primarily attracted the attention of Mr. Wesley, though they did not ultimately absorb it. On the 17th of June, 1776, Mr. Wesley writes as follows:—

"After preaching at Durham, I went on to Darlington. The society here, lately consisting of nine members, is now increased to above seventy, many of whom are warm in their first love. At the love-feast, many of these spoke their experience with all simplicity. Here will surely be a plentiful harvest, if tares do not grow up with the wheat."

\* See Appendix, No. 7.

A separate book for the receipts and disbursements of the Darlington society, was commenced in the year 1778, and from the entries contained in this book, we must gain information.

The removal of the Wesleyans from the cottage in "Clay-row," to their next place of worship, cannot be fixed, though the place is well remembered as the "Methodist Meeting," by a few of the aged inhabitants of the town. It was a long room, which had formerly been a school-room, on the ground floor, in an obscure and nameless passage, on the right-hand side of Northgate, almost at the entrance of the street. It was regularly fitted up with pulpit and seats, after the manner of those times; when solitary conversions, (frequently in spite of the persecutions of those of a man's household,) made solitary sittings more appropriate to the wants of the congregations, than those provisions of the present day; when families require a pew, in which to worship God in concert and company. In those days, not only were members of the same family separated, but, as was very proper seeing that this was the case, the sexes were also separated, and the males sat on one side, and the females on the other. The recollections of the early places of Wesleyan worship, are those of pious people, whose ancestors were converted from sin unto holiness, by the labours of the primitive apostles of methodism. They remember the places in connexion with the fact that, "this and that man was born there." An aged female, born in 1771, remembers hearing her mother relate that, when they lived at Brafferton, she attended the room in Northgate, and there heard words, and received impressions, which led to her conversion and connexion with methodism. Like Lydia, as the Lord had opened her heart, she opened her house for the reception of his servants, which formed an additional centre of pious attraction, and of rural influence for the extension of methodism. This aged friend at that time was six years of age, and this corresponds with Mr. Wesley's visit in 1777, when he says, "I have not lately found so lively a work in any part of England as here. The society is constantly increasing, and seems to be all on fire for God. There is nothing among them but humble, simple love; no dispute, no jar of any kind. They exactly answer the description that David Brainard gives of his Indian congregation. I particularly desired both the preachers and leaders to have an especial care over them, and, if possible, to prevent either the devil or his agents from poisoning their sim-

plicity. Many of them already know, that 'the blood of Jesus Christ' hath 'cleansed from all sin.' This state of things would create a necessity for a larger place of worship, and it would seem as if the following year were the year of the removal of the Wesleyans from those temporary places of worship to one built specially for the purpose. The accounts of this room do not include any such items as seat-rents; but as the earliest society-book we have, commences in July, 1778, only half a year before there are such entries as seem to indicate preparations for a chapel, the inference that no seat-rents were paid, is not very conclusive. In order to record all the recollections of the room in Northgate, it may be needful to remark that, after it had stood vacant for some years, it was taken by the Independents, and occupied by them, until a secession led to their building the present chapel. As this bears date, 1812, and the old place was occupied by the original church sometime after the present one was occupied by the seceding party, this reference will bring the old "Methodist Meeting," as it was called, within the recollection of many who are still living. There are a few who remember Mr. Wesley preaching in it, but this must have been in 1777, and of course seventy-three years ago.

The funds of those days were one, and from the society-book our facts must be drawn, to fix the date of the new meeting-house. A Mr. George Brown appears to have been a principal man in the erection of this building. On the 5th of December, 1777, the sum of £27. 7s. was paid into his hands, which left a balance in favour of the society of £43. 19s. 3d.; and on the 12th of December, 1778, there is an entry on the debit side of the account, of £2. 0s. 9d., *from the Gallery*. On the 6th of February, 1779, is an entry, "To cash collected for the house, £2. 7s. 0d.," which was doubtless the amount of some additional subscriptions. From the above date, the entry for the gallery, varying a little, is a regular entry in the society's receipts; and on the 5th of July, is the following entry; "Cash paid Mr. Brown for interest, due January 10th, £5. 12s. 6d." A subsequent entry states the amount of the principal at £105., and the half-year's interest at £2. 7s. 3d. No better proof will be required by those who know the consequences of chapel-building, that this was the time of its being built, than that a standing debt had been incurred, and a regular entry was thenceforth made for the payment of interest.



Mr. Myles in his "Chronological History of Methodism," dates the first Chapel in Darlington in 1771. But as he "puts down those houses which were wholly devoted to the worship of God, many of which were small," this date probably refers to the place which had been rented in Northgate, as before stated. At this date, there were only nine members in society, and the cause was evidently not in such a state as to require, or be able to build, a chapel. But in 1776, the revival increased them to seventy, and quite altered both the demands and the means of the society.

This chapel was an oblong-square brick building, about twenty-seven feet long, with an end gallery, and it is probable, that the bottom of the place was free. It stood on the right-hand side of Bondgate; was until recently occupied as a cabinet-maker's shop; and is in the occupation of Mr. Peverley; and the original windows still occupy the places which they occupied when the chapel was built. The aged friend above named, remembers, when about eight years of age, accompanying her aunt to hear Mr. Wesley at five o'clock in the morning; and that when they were standing in the area on the street, to see him pass, he laid his hand on her head, commended her for her early attendance on the worship of God, and gave her his blessing. The preachers in the Yarm circuit, to which Darlington belonged at the time of the erection of this chapel, were, George Story, Edward Jackson, and Thomas Wride. The circuit-book contains no accounts for building; nor does Mr. Wesley's Journal make any mention of it, though he visited Darlington the same year. He came from Leeds to Darlington, and under the date of May 7th, 1779, writes as follows:—

"Friday, 7th. After having visited the intermediate societies, I came to Darlington, and found some of the liveliest people in the North of England. All but one or two of the society are justified; great part of them partakers of the Great Salvation and all of them seem to retain their first simplicity, and to be as teachable as little children." He does not name preaching in the "Meeting-house," but he says,

"Sunday, 9th. I preached in the Market-place, and all the congregation behaved well but a party of the Queen's Dragoons." At this time he stood by the Church-gates, and the circumstance here named is still in the recollection of an aged Wesleyan then a boy; who remembers Mr. Wesley reproving the soldiers, and reminding them of the tolerant principles of



"their master;" by whom, of course, he meant George III.; who resisted all the attempts of his courtiers to induce him to tolerate persecution against the methodists, and interfered to secure them the protection of the Toleration Act, when it was denied them by some of the magistrates to whom they applied. The Rev. H. Moore in his life of Wesley says,

"In London the rioters were not easily subdued. They assembled at various places, and frequently treated Mr. Wesley and many of his serious hearers in a shameful manner. They followed them with showers of stones, and once attempted to unroof the Foundery, where the congregation was assembled, and had nearly accomplished their design. The common cry was, 'You may treat them as you please, for there is no law for them.' But Sir John Ganson, the chairman of the Middlesex Justices, called on Mr. Wesley, and informed him, 'that he had no need to suffer these riotous mobs to molest him;' adding, 'Sir, I and the other Middlesex Magistrates have *orders from above*, to do you justice whenever you apply to us.' A short time after he did apply. Justice was done, though not with rigour; and from that period the society had peace in London. It was very confidently stated, in that day, that when the question concerning the persecutions suffered by the societies at this time, came before the council, the King declared, that 'No man in his dominions, should be persecuted on account of religion, while he sat on the throne.' His late Majesty also, and indeed all that dynasty, have acted on the same principle.

"A remarkable circumstance, which Mr. Wesley related to me, may throw considerable light on those 'orders from above.' One of the original society of Methodists at Oxford, on the departure of its founders from the university, after seeking for others like-minded, at length joined the society of Quakers, and settled at Kew. Being a man of considerable property, and exemplary behavior, he was much respected, and favoured with free permission to walk in the royal gardens. Here he frequently met the King, who conversed freely with him, and with much apparent satisfaction. Upon one of these occasions, his Majesty knowing that he had been at Oxford, enquired if he knew the Messrs. Wesley, adding, 'They make a great noise in the nation.' The gentleman replied, 'I know them well, King George; and thou mayest be assured, that thou hast not two better men in thy dominions, nor men that love thee better than John and Charles Wesley,'

He then proceeded to give some account of their principles and conduct; with which the King seemed much pleased.—When Mr. Wesley had concluded, I said, ‘We see, sir, the Lord can bring a tale to the ear of the King.’—He replied, with much feeling, ‘O, I have always found the blessedness of a *single eye*, of leaving all to Him.’”

The “horse-block,” or stone, which a century ago, supplied its place, was very generally the pulpit of the street-missionary, and Mr. Wesley took his stand on the one then standing at the gates of our parish-church. Before M<sup>c</sup> Adam had made us roads on which wheels would *run*, or Lord Brougham had given his legal sanction to the light carriage which now bears his name, the faithful steed had to do double duty, in bringing his burly rider and his canny wife, to market and to church; and the stone at the church-gates was as essential, as the more active substitute, who now hands his mistress into her carriage. But for this stone, her predecessor could not have mounted the pillion. This stone, rendered useless by modern improvements, it seems, has rather recently been removed.

The itinerant system of Mr. Wesley originated a unique system of finance. The preachers of those days spent but little time at one place. They were held to be on the “circuit,” or the “round,” as it was indifferently called, and all their wants were met, either by the people, or the society stewards, as the case might require. The Yarm society book contains the following entries:—

	£	s.	d.
“July 1st, 1761,			
Mr. Fugill’s and Mr. Wesley’s charges...	0	13	8
A Preacher’s Ditto.....	0	2	6
Paid Lad for dressing the horses.....	0	1	6
Horse-Drink.....	0	1	8
“November 30th., Loosing a letter .....	0	0	4
“April 2nd, 1762. By cash for dressing (i. e. cleaning) preachers’ boots.....	0	2	0
“July 10th. Sundry expenses, as washing, mending, &c.....	0	5	2
“Sep. 27th. Preacher’s victuals &c.....	0	13	7
Sundry expenses.....	0	3	2
Mr. Manners’ horse .....	0	12	7½
“March 30th, 1763. By cash for Mr. Jaco: a pair of shoes .....	0	6	0
“April 2nd. The preachers’ boots cleaning	0	1	0

	£.	s.	d.
"June 11th. A pair of stockings, Mr. W.	0	5	0
18th. The preacher's horse one night .....	0	1	9
30th. A pair of Stockings, Mr. Henst .....	0	3	0
"Nov. 26th, 1764. Pd. Mr. Rowell's Board	0	10	0
* Barber and Shoe-black .....	0	2	0
"April 24th, 1765. Mr. Waldron's liquor when sick .....	0	4	9
Mr. Rowell's board .....	0	18	0
Mr. Waldron's, at his own house .....	0	4	0
"August 17th. By washing the preacher's Linen .....	0	2	3
"Jan. 2nd, 1765. Mr. Rowell 14 nights..	0	14	0
"June 13th, 1770. Part of the expenses when Mr. Wesley was here. ....	1	0	0
Mr Rankin one night .....	0	1	0
"July 6th. Mr. John Nelson† one night..	0	2	0"

These are a few of the entries in the society book kept at Yarm, from 1761 forward. The last entry it contains referring to Mr. Wesley, is under date of April 5th, 1790, the year before his death. This is as follows:—"To expenses when Mr. Wesley was here, and postage, &c., £0. 14s. 4d." This system of finance bears upon its component parts, the evidences of a state of transition to some state of greater comfort, both to the preachers and stewards, when success should lead to the division of the circuits, and confine the preachers to such localities and limits, as should place them within the more frequent reach of the comforts of home. The system which gave rise to entries so unique, was not the creation of such principles as sometimes lament its departure, and sigh for its return. The books which contain these truly original items, contain also the evidence of the liberality with which, as soon as funds and circumstances permitted, the stewards adopted a system of finance which shews a christian and courteous regard to the comfort and feelings of those labourers, whom the scriptures pronounce to be worthy of their hire, and to whom no well-regulated, christian mind will begrudge it.

An anecdote, supplied by juvenile querulousness, will not unaptly illustrate this subject. At a certain quarterly meet-

\* These are regular quarterly charges.

† See Appendix, No. 8.

ing, when the stipend of the modern preachers was handed to them by the steward, a young local preacher exclaimed, "Ah! it is not as it was in the days of Wesley and Nelson, when they came to preach in this county, and ate blackberries when they had done, and slept on their saddlebags." The superintendent meekly replied, "well, brother, I do not deny that such *was* the case; but the question is, *ought* it to have been so? You are a young local preacher, and there has been a whisper about your becoming a travelling preacher. Now let us suppose this to be the case, and that on the last Sabbath, you had done what I did: i. e. preached three times, and travelled from place to place, met classes at each place, &c., whether would you rather have supped on blackberries or beafsteaks?" This was an appeal to a rather sensitive organ, and the youth was speechless!

The cases which form the materials for modern contrasts were painful, and sometimes humiliating exceptions; but they were exceptions. One of the duties of an "assistant" was to "see that his colleagues wanted for nothing." When the preachers rested their wants were supplied; and their travelling expenses were paid by the stewards of each *society*, according to its ability, and the conference made them grants to meet deficiencies. The quarterages, &c., were paid from the quarter-day board: the expenditure of the Darlington society for man and horse, the first quarter after a book was commenced was, £11. 16s. 0d., and the quarterly payment to the circuit expenses was only £2. 7s. 0d. The expenditure of the Yarm society in the corresponding quarter was £9. 7s. 10½d., and the payment of this society to the quarter-day board was only £1. 5s. 0d. The greater proportion of the expenses of those days was paid by the *societies*. When the preachers could not be accommodated by the members of society, they were lodged and boarded by some friend. The above amount from the Yarm society-book includes two items for preachers' board and horses, one of £1. 2s. 0d. and another of £2. 3s. 4d. The preachers here used to lodge with a leader called Christopher Musgrave; who, it would seem, had 1s. 6d. a night for their accommodation. "To Christopher for the preachers," is a constantly-recurring item in these early and original accounts; but we had to travel over six years' entries to discover his surname. In the year 1785 is the following entry: "To Christopher Musgrave for Mr. Gamble, 3 nights, 4s. 6d." He turns out to be one of the excellent leaders of that

period. There is an interesting memoir of "Christopher" in the W. M. Magazine for 1812, pp. 173-177. From this it appears that "he was lame in consequence of a rheumatic complaint in both his knees, and walked on crutches for forty years." He was brought to God in Whitby in 1758; and was so fully in earnest that he once walked from Whitby to Leeds, a journey of 60 miles, to a lovefeast; and when he got to the door of the old chapel, he was asked for his ticket, but he in the simplicity of his heart, told the stewards that he had not got one. They then asked him if he had not got any other business at Leeds than that of coming to the lovefeast; he told them he had not, so they thought it a pity to turn him back, and therefore admitted him." He died in Leeds in 1809, aged 73 years.

In 1779 the Darlington society began to bear its part in Wesley's expenses. On the 22nd of May are the following entries:—

	£.	s.	d.
"To expenses attending Mr. Wesley.....	1	10	9"
"To Mr. Story, for Mr. Wesley's expenses.	0	3	0"

From the Yarm society book it appears that, Mr. Wesley had set up his chaise, for there is the following entry:—"Mr. Wesley's chaise 9½d;" but whether for cleaning or repairing, does not appear. This is under date of July 11th, 1779. Mr. W. was now 76 years of age.

At this time it was resolved to hold the circuit quarterly meeting at Darlington, and it was held accordingly on the 29th of June. The following is the principal entry of local interest:—

"Quarter dinner gratis by Mr. Pickering." The "stewards for the year 1779," may perhaps also be named: they were, "Mr. George Brown and Mr. John Middleton." Mr. Pickering was one of the earliest and best friends of methodism in those days, and Mr. Wesley was generally his guest. Mr. Brown was also, once at least it is believed, honoured by entertaining him. Mr. B. was a truly devoted christian, and one of the local preachers; and Mr. M. Nayler and he, used to preach every alternate sabbath in Darlington, the travelling preachers only coming every other Sunday. Mr. Nayler's connection with Mr. Brown as thus engaged, must have been of more recent date, as he did not come to Darlington until the year 1785. A memoir was published of Mr. N. in the W. M. Magazine for 1841, pp. 445-461, but of Mr. Brown I cannot find any memorial.

Mr. Wesley visited Darlington, June 1st, 1780, preaching at Aycliffe in his way from the north. He writes,

"Thursday, June 1st. About ten I preached at Aycliffe, a large village, twelve miles from Durham: all the inhabitants whereof seem now as full of good-will as they were once of prejudice.

"I preached at Darlington in the evening. It is good to be here: the liveliness of the people animates all that come near them. On Friday evening we had a love-feast, at which many were greatly comforted by hearing such artless, simple accounts of the mighty works of God."

On this visit it is believed he preached at the market-cross, standing on the steps. An elderly lady, now 85, remembers him preaching there, and in raptures describes his countenance as truly angelic. The society book contains the following item:—"June 3rd. Sundry expenses, Mr. Wesley's horses, &c., £1. 1s. 1d."

In the year 1782, Darlington became the residence of a preacher, or was so frequently visited as to require a prophet's room. Under date of December 17th, 1781, is the following charge:—"Paid in earnest for House, 1s." February 2nd, of the following year, "to Thomas Gibson for Bed, £2. 5s. 0d.: and the May following, "To Bed Curtains, £1. 17s. 0d.," and "To making Bed Curtains, 3s. 9d." The rent seems to have been paid to Christopher; for the first entry is, "to rent for Preachers, old Christopher, £1. 3s. 6d." probably part of his house, for one of the preachers, travelling in the Yarm circuit. Mr. Watson seems to have been the preacher for whom this provision was made: Mrs. Watson had her allowances from Newcastle. As the second preacher was not always a married man, this house or room, would not always be occupied by a preacher with a wife. The superintendent lived at Yarm, and his house rent was paid by the quarter-day board; that is by the *circuit*; Mr. W's by the Darlington *society*. To the end of these accounts in December, 1786, Christopher Musgrave was paid both the rent, and "for the preachers." The last entries are,

	£.	s.	d.
"By room rent .....	1	5	0"
"To Christopher Musgrave for preacher ...	0	4	6"

This shews the "House" of a former entry to have been but a "Room." In the same page, "the Meeting-house" of former days, is called a Chapel; and Mr. Brown's interest still

retains its place, but is reduced to £2. 2s. 6d. The income from the gallery was only £1. 13s. 9d.

	£.	s.	d.
"The total expenditure of the quarter .....	11	18	10
"By cash received .....	8	17	0
"December 30th, carried to new book .....	£2	1	4"

This new book, we are sorry to say, is lost, and the next commences in 1802. Perhaps, as the old one has served us so well, had we the new one, we might arrive at the chronology of an enlargement of the Chapel, which, notwithstanding the discouraging state of the funds, must have taken place about this time. The aged Wesleyan named above, who heard Mr. Wesley at the Church-gates, says, that, when about sixteen years of age, he heard Mr. W. preach in the Chapel, after an enlargement, and before it was quite finished. In the first Chapel there had been an end gallery only; but the enlargement made provision for a gallery on three sides. The pulpit was against the west wall, and the bottom was in part occupied by a large pew for the singers; at least at the time it was vacated for the present one. One who joined the society early in life remembers that, when the removal took place from Northgate to the first chapel in Bondgate, the wonder was, how they should ever fill it; but it could not be more than seven years before this enlargement was required. This would bring down the date to the ending of the accounts in the old society book, and make it concurrent with Mr. Wesley's visit in June, 1786, of which he thus writes:—

"Sunday, 11th. I was obliged in the evening to preach abroad; afterwards we held a lovefeast, at which many plain people spoke the height and depth of christian experience, in the most plain and artless manner."

It is remembered by the aged man above-named that, on one of his visits, Mr. W. preached in what was called the "Raff-yard," which is now Commercial Street. This would be an excellent place to accommodate an overflowing chapel, on occasion of its being re-opened after it was enlarged. This aged pilgrim remembers Mr. Wesley preaching three times in the open air; once at the door of Mr. Pratt, a chemist and druggist, on a hogshead; once on the stone at the Church-gates; and on this visit, in the "Raff-yard"; which of course was contiguous to the Chapel, and where Mr. Wesley informs us he "was *obliged to* preach in the evening." In this year,



there are the following entries which are connected with this subject:—

	£.	s.	d.
"Mr. Brown for letters to Mr. Wesley ....	0	6	4½
"To cash paid for whitewashing and cleans- ing the Meeting-house.....	1	7	6
"To cash paid for Mr. Wesley's horses.....	0	16	0"

These entries prove a visit which was the result of an extensive correspondence with Mr. Brown, who was the principal man connected with the chapel, at a time when, after enlargement most probably, it was whitewashed and cleaned. Mr. Wesley only made one visit to Darlington after this date.

In 1749, the only circuits in the north of England were, Yarm, The Dales, and Newcastle; and the nearest to these were, Leeds and York; and in 1759, Mr. Mather writes that, Yarm was in the York circuit. (Lives of early Methodist Preachers, Vol. i., p. 270.) From this it would appear as if Yarm had lost the credit of being the head of the circuit, sometime between 1749, when a chasm commences in the published minutes, and 1765, when they are resumed. And yet in this year, it emerges from this supposed obscurity, as the head of a circuit, with Matthew Rowell, James Kershaw, and James Brownfield, as the preachers. (Min., Vol. i. p. 47.) The numbers were not given in 1765, but in the following year, Yarm had 1103, and York only 982. The Dales had 722, and Newcastle, 1804. The earliest Society Book for Yarm commences in 1761, and the earliest Circuit Book, in 1773, on the first page of which, and next to Yarm, Darlington stands; when Duncan Wright, Joseph Thompson, and William Brammah, were the preachers, and when there had been a decrease in the three preceeding years of 260 members.

Hitherto, Yarm had been the head of a tract of country, including five of the towns which now form the heads of circuits, viz. Darlington, Stockton, Stokesley, Whitby, and Thirsk. The time had now arrived for the circuit to be divided. In 1774, therefore, Thirsk became the head of a circuit, which brought an additional preacher on the same ground. They divided with 880 members, and the following year, Yarm had 640, and Thirsk 530. Whitby from its early history had been remarkable for gracious revivals of religion, and in 1779 Mr. W. writes as follows:—



"Sat. 26th. After preaching at Stokesley and Guisbrough, I went on to our loving, earnest brethren at Whitby; just of the same spirit with those at Darlington, in the opposite point of the circuit." In 1783, it was separated from Yarm, with but 875 members in the whole circuit, but at the following conference, Yarm had 505, and Whitby, 442.

#### CHAPTER IV.

CONTENTS.—DEATH OF MR. WESLEY, AND AGITATIONS IN THE SOCIETIES.—STOCKTON MADE THE HEAD OF THE CIRCUIT INCLUDING DARLINGTON.—BUILDING OF THE CHAPEL IN BONDGATE.—ORGAN.—DARLINGTON CIRCUIT DIVIDED, AND STOCKTON MADE THE HEAD OF THE NEW CIRCUIT.—A SECOND CHAPEL BUILT IN DARLINGTON BEYOND SKERNE.—SECESSION IN 1835.—DR. A. CLARKE ON METHODISM.—SOCIETY TICKETS.—CENTENARY.

Darlington was still greatly in the shade; and at the time of Mr. Wesley's death 1791, it had only 183 members. In the two circuits which had successively embraced it, Mr. W. had seen raised up 2714, besides those means and agents on which so greatly depended the prosperity of his connexion in this part of the nation. At this time, though Darlington was inferior to Thirsk and Whitby, it was superior both in numbers and resources to Yarm and Stockton; and yet the following year, Stockton became the head of the circuit instead of Yarm, and which also included Darlington, and the country from thence to Bishop-Auckland.

The time of Mr. Wesley's death was a period of great danger to the prosperity of methodism. He had done all he could to provide successors for the government of the societies, in defining the conference, and providing for the security of the chapels for the purposes for which they were erected. This was by what is known as, the "Deed of Declaration." But many chapels had been built before this deed was made, and the constitution of methodism was legally settled; and on the agitations commenced by Mr. Kilham, attempts were made to wrest some of these chapels from the connexion. One or two of the Darlington trustees sympathized with this movement, (though no division took place, and they continued liberally to support the "Old connexion," as it had now to be called,) and it was known to be their intention to seize the chapel and admit the seceders. In this case, a division would

doubtless have occurred; but it was averted by the determined fidelity of one who was privy to the intention who got possession of the key, and kept it until the storm was dissipated. This, however, must not be understood to imply that there was any thing defective in the old trust-deeds; for wherever any of the chapels were alienated, and legal means have been tried for their recovery, the success of the trustees has been complete. Peace was preserved in Darlington, and prosperity followed.

It has already been intimated, that soon after the death of Mr. Wesley, who had always been much attached to Yarm, it ceased to be the circuit-town, and Stockton succeeded. Yarm had only 47 members, and contributed £1. 10s. to the quarter-day board; Stockton had 82, and paid £1. 18s. 6d.; and Darlington 183, and sent £5. 5s. This appears strange, and the result seems to prove that, Darlington ought to have been constituted the head of the circuit. In the year 1805, Darlington was made the circuit-town; and until 1815, Stockton continued incorporated with Darlington. In 1805, there were 747 members in the circuit; in the town of Stockton 112, and in Darlington, 233. The preachers were William Warrener, and John Slack, who had been in the circuit, the preceding year.

The next important step was, the building the present chapel. This was in the year 1812, when Thomas Vasey, Jun., Samuel Sewell, and Henry Ranson, were stationed on the circuit. Mr. Vasey and Mr. Sewell had been in the circuit the preceding year; Mr. Ranson, who had passed the May district meeting held at Barnard-Castle, was sent as a "missionary," owing to the growing importance of the circuit, on the recommendation of the same meeting, that a missionary should be appointed. At this time there were 779 members in the circuit. So mightily had the word run, and the members been multiplied, since the aged friend named above, remembered some of the fathers preaching to three persons in Clay-Row! When they removed to Northgate, the improvement was immense: when the first chapel was built, the wonder of scoffing unbelief was, how it could be filled: but though the enlargement had more than doubled its size, it could not now comfortably contain even the members of society. The circuit still included Stockton, Hartlepool, and Yarm, and the contiguous country places, but as nearly one half of the members in the circuit lived in or near Darlington, not only a

larger chapel than the old one was felt to be necessary, but it was seen that, according to the usual proportion between members and hearers, a very large one was imperatively required; the more so as there was only one church, and that closed on Sunday evenings. This demand was met at an expense of £4000; towards which the old premises sold for £290. This chapel was the one now occupied by the Wesleyans. It stands in an area on the left-hand, at the top of Bondgate; and it is a handsome, elevated, airy, brick building, with stone door-way and dressings. It is in what architects designate as, the Italian style of architecture. The front, which is the east-end of the building, finishes in a pediment, in which is a neat stone tablet, containing in large capitals, the following inscription: "METHODIST CHAPEL, 1812." The whole appearance is neat and substantial. It is 64ft. long by 52ft. wide, inside. When the old chapel was built the wonder was, how it would ever be filled, and a very respectable "Friend," on coming to see the rising walls of the new one, gave it as his deliberate opinion, that in building a chapel of these dimensions, the methodists must surely be losing their reason. It has a gallery all round of very suitable proportions, and neat in its appearance. The end of the chapel opposite the entrance, from about 13 feet on each side, is carried out in a semi-circular form, for the communion-place below, and the orchestra above. The consequence is, that the communion-place is hid by the pulpit and desk. The pulpit is a neat painted one, standing on pillars, and is ascended by a geometrical staircase. The bottom is filled with pews, except the corners, which are occupied by free-seats with backs, and which afford such accommodation as appears to be appreciated. A good proportion of the centre pews also, is free. The pews under the end gallery against the lobby are raised; and the whole affords accommodation for about 1400 persons. At the time it was built, it must have been one of the largest chapels in the connexion. It bears a striking resemblance to the Southwark, Lambeth, and Canterbury chapels, and the designs were furnished by the same architect, Mr. Jenkins, of London. At the time it was built, Messrs. Christopher Dove and Robert Baistow, were the circuit-stewards; and Messrs. Henry Smith and John Pomfret, were the society-stewards. The Rev. Thomas Vasey laid the foundation-stone; and when finished, it was opened on Sunday, July the 4th, 1813, by the Rev. Samuel Bardsley, the chairman of the district, who

preached from Haggai, 2nd chapter, latter part of verse 9. The Rev. Jabez Bunting, (now D. D.) of Halifax, preached in the afternoon, on Psalm 89, verse 7., and in the evening, on first of Corinthians, 16th chapter, verse 22. Dr. Bunting also preached the last sermon in the old chapel, on the Saturday evening preceding, on Romans, 8th chapter, verse 17. The chapel is heated with hot air circulated through flues built for the purpose; in 1834, gas was introduced; and the interior of the building has an air of neatness, cleanliness, respectability, and comfort.

Mr. Wesley was a great admirer of sacred music, and he not only published on the science of music, but published also a set of tunes for his societies, under the title of "Sacred Harmony." At the time of his visit in 1779, an entry is made of this work in the circuit-book, and it is charged 15s. Mr. Story writes under this entry, "for the society." In more recent years are entries "for singers," and a double-bass, in the trustees' accounts, which shew that sacred music was not neglected. But the taste for musical display, in Darlington, as in many other places, eventually led to the erection of an organ; and in 1840, an excellent one was introduced, at a cost of £300. or £320. It is a sweet and powerful instrument, with twenty stops, and a swell with five stops. There is also a powerful range of pedals. Both the organ and swell have great compass and power. It was built by Mr. Nicholson of Rochdale; and is played, with excellent taste and effect, by Mr. W. Foggitt, of Darlington; who, with the choir, by whom he is assisted, affords his services gratuitously. As a substitute for the band of performers which it has superseded, it must be a change which adds greatly to the solemnity of divine worship. The case is a very neat one, painted in imitation of wainscot; it fills the orchestra in which it is placed; and adds greatly to the neatness of the chapel.

Class-rooms, a large vestry, and convenient houses for two ministers, were built successively, after the building of the chapel; and the whole forms such a property as is only to be met with, where Wesleyan methodism has become established and prosperous.

The work of God continued to prosper, so that two years after the building of this chapel, the circuit had four ministers stationed upon it, and returned to conference, 1190 members. In 1815, it was thought desirable that the circuit should be divided, and Stockton was made the head of the new circuit.

Yarm, the original circuit-town, of course was attached to Stockton. What was at first the Yarm circuit, was now divided into five. The places included in the Darlington circuit, thus permanently formed, were, Darlington, Haughton, Hurworth, Aycliffe, Heighington, Midridge, Ingleton, Barton, Gainford, Coniscliffe, Layton, Melsonby, and Brafferton. This is the order in which they stand in the book; which is probably the order in which they were taken on the plan. The circuit was divided with 1190 members in all: and at the following conference, Darlington returned 679, and Stockton 623; being an increase on the same ground, of 212; and Stockton took an additional preacher.

The spread of methodism for the next twenty years was rapid: but its most prosperous period was from 1825 to 1830; at the conclusion of which period, Darlington circuit returned to conference 1090 members. In 1827, Darlington became the head of a district, and the centre of a circle of six prosperous circuits, which contained 4755 members of society. On the death of Mr. Wesley, when districts were first formed, Whitby was made the head of the district, with 2714 members: now at the division of the district it contained 8956. Thus God had prospered the labours of his servants within the limits of those two circuits to which successively Darlington had belonged: the Dales' and the Yarm Circuits once included this entire district.

In 1831, it was resolved at the quarterly meeting, that a second chapel should be built in the town of Darlington: and by the May district meeting, this resolution, was approved and forwarded to the conference. The following is the entry in the district minute book:—

“We unanimously approve of the decision of the Darlington quarterly meeting, to build a second chapel at Darlington; believing that such a step is highly necessary: and we also recommend that they be not too contracted in their expenditure.”

This chapel was built accordingly, in Park Street, a very populous and destitute part of the town, and was opened by Dr. Bunting. It is a good and neat brick building, and will seat about 300 persons. It was well attended for a while; but, owing to causes which had begun to have a depressing effect on the interests of Wesleyan Methodism, in Darlington, and which were brought into active operation soon after this chapel was built, it is now chiefly used as a Sunday school;

though there is service in it every sabbath afternoon, and every Friday evening.

The causes here adverted to are such as originated in what will long be painfully remembered as "The division" This was on the establishment of the Theological Institution; and in sympathy with the views of Dr. Warren, in 1834 and 1835; and avowedly for the purpose of obtaining what was considered, "a liberal form of church-government." An under current had long been running in this direction in Darlington, and in connexion with the excitement of that period, it broke out in a secession. Such was the prejudice created, that the chapels here were comparatively forsaken; and before the division had produced even its proximate results, there were 386 members less in the circuit, than when it commenced. It were easy to indulge in history here; and also in theory on modes of church-government; but in deference to the feelings of the best men of all parties, and to the claims of Wesleyan charity, we forbear. Mr. Wesley took every means in his power of foreclosing discussion on these subjects, and confining the attention of his followers to the one work of saving souls from death. He tells them that, they are "not to mend his rules but to keep them, not for wrath, but for conscience' sake:" and to his ministerial successors, he says, "you have nothing to do but to save souls." In 1784, forty years after the holding of the first Conference, he settled the form of our constitution, and devolved his authority for legislation and administration, according to his principles, rules, and usages, on a conference composed exclusively of ministers. This was by what is known amongst us, as the "*Poll Deed*," or "*Deed of Declaration*;" it was enrolled in the High Court of Chancery; and with the Wesleyans, conference and people, it must have all the force of law. This is being better understood by every attempt at innovation; for in addition to the discussion which is thus originated, legal proceedings and enquiries have always been resorted to; and these shew the utter impossibility of such changes as are demanded. Whether Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors were right or wrong, they believed such changes would be chilling and deteriorating; and they were in the habit of referring to the history of the presbyterian churches of England in proof of their position. Mr. Wesley's coadjutors are well known to have been the most opposed on principle, to the introduction of laymen even where alone they could legally be introduced;

into our financial committees. This was done in equal numbers with the ministers, by the persevering efforts of Dr. Bunting, many years ago, in opposition to many who had been the companions of Mr. Wesley in his labours, and his counsellors in his plans. Their admonitions were generally such as to shew their apprehensions of a deluge; and one especially used to exclaim, "You will let the sea in upon you." Our hope is, that eventually, the legal impossibility of such changes will be seen, and that men will cease to attempt them, and address themselves singly and unitedly, in humble and prayerful dependence on the blessing of the God of their fathers, and regarding "the world as their parish," to the working of those agencies and institutions, which Mr. Wesley originated, fixed, and handed down to us, and which have been so pre-eminently successful in accomplishing the ends of all his plans and labours, in the salvation of immortal souls.

On this subject we have confined ourselves to history and fact; for there is no end to speculation; and there is no region in which we are less likely to find a resting-place than in the forming of ecclesiastical constitutions. The simple questions here are, were the Wesleyans of Darlington faithful to their trust? and how may this page of their history be improved for the accomplishment of their great mission in the salvation of souls? As to the former of these questions, we hesitate not gratefully to record our conviction, that they understood their responsibilities, as imposed by Mr. Wesley's Poll-Deed, his rules, his principles, and his purposes, and only did their duty. If those who have seceded sincerely believe that they have accomplished an imperative duty in originating a rival establishment, we deal in no censures on the subject. "To their own master they stand or fall." An opportunity is thus afforded of seeing the two forms of church-government in contrast—though they need not exist in collision—with each other; and if any prefer our means and modes of worship in connexion with their forms of church-polity, they may now exercise the right of preference which every man indisputably enjoys, by peaceably seceding from us and uniting with them; instead of labouring in vain to alter what every lawyer of any note who has been consulted, on the bench or at the bar, declares cannot be altered. The division here is not referred to for the purpose of reviving painful recollections, or leading to controversy, but for the purposes of historical fidelity, and of supplying its moral for the instruction of all. One of the



least evils of agitation is, it diverts the minds of the members of the churches from their proper work of saving souls from death, to those on which men never have agreed, and which are confessedly left so undecided, that different forms have co-existed, or succeeded each other, and God has blessed them all to the conversion of sinners. The worst evil of agitation is, that it checks this result, for which every one ought to be disposed to sacrifice his predilections, and throws the men and the means by which God has revived his work into painful suspicion. The world scoffs; the penitent hesitates; and in many cases, seasons of agitation have proved seasons of awful peril to piety and character, especially "to the weak," who greatly need the sympathy and the help of all. The work of saving souls had prospered gloriously in Darlington until it was checked by the division. The period since, has been spent in regaining the confidence of the public, and of those whose confidence must be secured if their souls are saved, but who must have been shaken, to say the least, at the time adverted to. But we are not without reason to hope that, the purely spiritual mission of methodism is being better understood, and that spiritual prosperity may be more abundantly realized. The congregations have seldom been better than now they are; the societies are on the increase; the resources in every department are also improving; our friends generally are better than ever satisfied with methodism as it is; and "the best of all is, God is with us."

In 1833, the increase in Great Britain and Ireland was, 24,400; but this delightful state of things was interrupted, by agitation, and dissension and discouragement followed. This also proves the position of our motto: that when "*The churches have rest they are edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, are multiplied.*" Since the agitations in 1835, however, the connexion has prospered, and in Great Britain alone, it has increased nearly one sixth of the entire number. Surely this proves that forms of church-government are of infinitely less moment than is generally supposed: and that our founder, in this as in other things, understood the true interests of mankind, in foreclosing as much as in him lay, all controversy on these subjects, and confining our attention to the working of his simply social means, for the great and holy purpose of saving souls from death.



The very common affirmation that "the methodists are a fallen people," therefore, because they do not increase as once they did, is sufficiently accounted for, and is unworthy of regard; and as in the case of the discipling of the societies, it is the most confidently met and refuted by the aged ministers of the body. This indeed is no new slander. At the conference of 1777, Mr. Wesley had to refute it, as a "report that had spread far and wide." It has not been confined to Great Britain. In 1823, when as president, Dr. A. Clarke visited Belfast, he writes as follows:—"In the evening, I had a meeting with the preachers, stewards, and several of our principal friends, together with almost all the leaders, male and female; and endeavoured to set them right on matters on which they had got very uneasy. It was a very solemn and affecting time; and I believe all were determined to leave minor matters and considerations, and strive together for the hope of the gospel—laying themselves out more abundantly to bring sinners to God. On one proposing the question to me—'Is methodism what it has been?'—I answered it in a way very different from what was, I believe, expected and intended by it. 'No! it is more rational—more stable—more consistent—more holy—more useful to the community—and a greater blessing to the world at large.' And all this I found no difficulty in *proving*." (Life, vol. 3., pp 50, 51.)

We have heard such testimonies from many of our aged ministers, and regard the slander, as it was regarded in the days of Mr. Wesley:—"as a mere device of Satan to make our hands hang down." Dr. Clarke's latest opinion of Wesleyan Methodism is as follows:—"It was inserted by Dr. Clarke in an album, which was presented to him by the Rev. R. Newstead, during the last conference he attended in Liverpool, and about a month before his death:—

"IN PERPETUAM REI MEMORIAM.

"I have lived more than three-score years and ten; I have travelled a good deal, both by sea and land; I have conversed with and seen many people, in and from different countries; I have studied the principal religious systems in the world; I have read much, thought much, and reasoned much; and the result is, I am persuaded of the simple, unadulterated truth of no book but the Bible; and of the true excellence of no system of religion but that contained in the Holy Scriptures; and especially Christianity, which is referred to in the Old Testament, and fully revealed in the New.

And while I think well of, and wish well to, all religious sects and parties, and especially to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, yet, from a long and thorough knowledge of the subject, I am led most conscientiously to conclude, that Christianity itself, as existing among those called Wesleyan Methodists, is the purest, the safest, that which is most to God's glory, and the benefit of mankind;—and that, both as to the creed there professed, form of discipline there established, and the consequent moral practice there vindicated. And I believe that among them is to be found the best form and body of Divinity that has ever existed in the church of Christ, from the promulgation of Christianity to the present day. To him who would say, 'Doctor Clarke, are you not a bigot?' without hesitation, I would answer, 'No, I am not; for by the grace of God, I am a Methodist!' Amen.

"*Liverpool, July 26th, 1832.*"

"ADAM CLARKE."

We have denominated the distinctive means of Wesleyan methodism as simply social; by which we mean that they are merely social means of mutual edification, by conversation on experimental and practical godliness. "There is one condition previously required," says Mr. Wesley, "in those who desire admission into these societies, viz., '*a desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins.*'" Such a society is no other than "*a company of men having the form, and seeking the power, of godliness; united, in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.*"

"That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in every class; one of whom is styled *the Leader.*"

"To each of those, of whose seriousness and good conversation I found no reason to doubt, I gave a testimony under my own hand, by writing the name of each on a ticket prepared for that purpose: every ticket implying as strong a recommendation of the person to whom it is given, as if I wrote at length, 'I believe the bearer hereof to be one that fears God and works righteousness.'

"Those who bore these tickets (these *Symbola*, or *Tesseræ*, as the ancients termed them: being of just the same force with the *epistolai systatikai*, *Commendatory Letters*

mentioned by the Apostle) wherever they came, were acknowledged by their brethren, and received with all cheerfulness. These were likewise of use in other respects. By these it was easily distinguished when the society were to meet apart, who were members of it and who not. These also supplied us with a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member. He has no new ticket at the quarterly visitation; (for so often the tickets are changed) and hereby it is immediately known that he is no longer of the community."

Below, we give one of these early tickets, preserved amongst some others, by the late W. Rymer, Esq., solicitor; a gentleman who for many years was a Wesleyan of eminent piety and usefulness, and who after adorning the doctrine of God his Saviour, and suffering for some years from paralysis, fell asleep in Jesus, on the 28th of December, 1848. He was a little curious in antiquities; and especially he had a pious respect for what was old in methodism, to which he was ardently attached. Of the few specimens of early tickets which he had picked up in his visits, the one given below is the earliest, and if it could give its history, it would doubtless deeply interest us and our readers. But we are left to infer all we can know from the name it bears. This is *John Woodhouse*.

June 1788.

Ye cannot serve God  
and Mammon.

Luke xvi. 13.

Y

*John Woodhouse*

Wesleyan-Methodist Society.

ESTABLISHED 1739.

Quarterly Ticket for March, 1850.

And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord.

1 Kings xvii. 16.

Z

*L. H. W.*

*Elizabeth H. Woodhouse.*

From the society book (which commences only the year after the date of his ticket,) it appears that the Woodhouse family lived in Darlington; and if the order of names means anything, they were the first subscribers to our mission fund in the circuit. They stand at the head of the first list of subscribers, which is for the year 1799, and is as follows:—"Mr. Woodhouse, 1s. 3d.; John Do., 1s. 3d.; Mrs. Do., 1s. 3d.; Mrs. Do., Sen., 6d.;" in all 4s. 3d. The total for Stockton, Darlington, &c., was only £2. 12s. We give Mr. Woodhouse's ticket, with the last that was issued for the sake of comparison, and which bears the name of the oldest Wesleyan in Darlington. This worthy relic and representative of the methodism of perhaps sixty years ago, is an excellent widow, who has been blind for some years; but having been brought to God in Bedale, she is not an authority for any of the statements contained in this work. She and her husband, both stand on the Darlington society book for 1794; and from the trustees' book it appears that, Thomas Hagstone, was the chapel-keeper, from 1816 to 1830, during which time there is a regular entry of his salary. The neat costume of this female "door-keeper in the house of our God," is so truly primitive, as almost to supersede the need of a ticket; though no one more regularly attends to receive one, or can give a better "reason of the hope that is in" her, than she.

A "Connexion" of "United Societies," committed to the pursuit and extension of experimental and practical godliness, was soon seen to be mighty from its very simplicity. As a "Connexion," it had all the advantages of a union of influence and resources; and in its separate classes, it enjoyed the agents and the means of local influence and extension. Questions on doctrine and discipline, formed no tests of initiation amongst the private members of society, and they were thus practically proscribed. This had the double advantage of avoiding distraction and division in the societies, and collision with other churches; and to this day the Wesleyans have never been the first to seize the sword of controversy. Mr. Wesley's motto was "The friends of all, the enemies of none." Experimental and practical godliness being the great subject of conversation, and the object to be extended, by those who had felt its power; each felt himself to be the agent of usefulness, as soon as he was converted, by whom his relative, his friend, or his neighbour, might be made the partaker of "like

precious faith." By some such narrative as convinced even Agrippa, (Acts xxvi,) he felt as if he possessed the power of persuasion and conviction; and this was held to involve the responsibility to make the attempt. His class—which to him was the means of edification—was considered as supplying the same to all; and further, union with his class was urged as an evidence of decision, and the means of passing the line of demarkation between the church and the world. The idea of individual responsibility and duty, was not sunk, by the people looking to the conference as the source of success or failure; but each member felt himself called to work this simply social system, for the salvation of his fellow-sinners; and the unparalleled success vouchsafed, especially during the lifetime of Mr. Wesley, shews the glorious result. We have seen how an itinerant carder became the missionary of mercy, first to an amiable family, and then to that circuit in which Darlington was afterwards included; how Mr. Unthank was the means of converting a man, in every sense a "rebel;" and how these two men brought to our town, the means of salvation to thousands who have joined them in the temple above; to the hundreds who are now called upon to read the history of methodism; and we hope, to tens of thousands yet unborn. May their simple soul-saving history, not be lost upon us!

The Centenary of Wesleyan methodism, in 1839, was throughout our connexion, a most interesting period of our history; and though the losses so recently sustained by secession painfully pressed on the minds of all, and must greatly have chastened a joy which otherwise would have been unmixed; yet to those who remained, it was a season which will long be remembered. Two meetings were held in Darlington, and on both occasions, tea was gratuitously provided. The first meeting was held in the vestry of Bondgate chapel, and four hundred persons indulged in the most delightful recollections and feelings on the occasion. This was on Tuesday the 15th of January, 1839. The ministers on the circuit were, the Rev. Messrs. Joseph Rayner, John Burgess, and Robert Cooke. The secretaries of the committee were, Mr. Burgess, and William Rymer, Esq.; and the Treasurer was George Gibson, Esq., of Hurworth Cottage. George James, Esq., of Hurworth, presided at the meeting in the chapel in the evening; and the speakers were, the Rev. Messrs. Robert Jackson, Philip Hardcastle, Peter C. Horton, and John Hodgson; and W. Skinner, Esq., of Stockton; Robert Gill, Esq., of Ea-

singwold; and Anthony Steele Esq., of Barnard-Castle. A large number of our friends had attended the meeting at Newcastle, the methodist metropolis of the north, and there they had promised subscriptions to the amount of £393. 15s. At the meeting in the evening, in Bondgate chapel, the additional sum of £264. 9s. 2d., was promised; making in all, a sum of £657. 9s. 2d. This was eventually made up, £702. 1s. 4d., for the Darlington circuit; and in the district, the sum of £4973. 14s. 9d. was subscribed, on the ground which was formerly included in the Dales' and the Yarm circuits; leaving all in gratitude to exclaim, "*What hath God wrought!*" The amount from all sources from the entire connexion was, £222,649. 19s. 10d.

On Friday the 25th of October, 1839, the day for holding the meetings to celebrate the establishment of methodism throughout the connexion, there was a prayer-meeting in the morning at seven o'clock; the Rev. Joseph Rayner preached in the forenoon, on Deuteronomy, 1st chapter, verse 11; in the afternoon, tea was provided for seven hundred persons in the bottom of the chapel; in the evening a meeting was held of such a character as to allow of those who felt inclined, to express their obligations and attachments to methodism; and on the platform erected for the occasion, each of the local preachers was presented with the "Centenary" volume; published for the centenary occasion, by the Rev. Thomas Jackson. The next day, the children of the Sunday schools were each presented with a cake, and a medal commemorative of the event. Thus, "*both young men, and maidens; old men and children,*" united to "*praise the name of the LORD.*"

## CHAPTER V.

CONTENTS.—INSTITUTIONS.—SUNDAY SCHOOLS.—LETTER FROM MR. WESLEY.—FIRST SUNDAY-SCHOOL IN DARLINGTON.—SCHOOLS, IN SKINNERGATE, BLACKWELL-GATE, PRATT'S BUILDINGS.—MR. PICKERING ROBINSON'S GIFT OF LAND FOR A SCHOOL IN SKINNERGATE.—DAY-SCHOOLS.—WESLEYAN BRANCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

THE local institutions connected with the Wesleyan societies in the Darlington circuit, require notice; and though chronologically they might have been assigned to those periods of the history of the societies with which they are connected, it was judged to be best to reserve them for a separate and concluding chapter. We shall of course notice,

*First*, our Sunday-schools. It is matter of grateful history to his followers, that Mr. Wesley gave his earliest attention to the claims of Sunday-schools, and his earliest countenance to their extension. The first Sunday-school, in Newcastle was established by the late Rev. Charles Atmore, one of Mr. Wesley's "Assistants;" on which Mr. W. wrote him as follows:—

"Madeley, March 24th, 1790.

"Dear Charles,—I am glad you have set up Sunday-schools in Newcastle. It is one of the noblest institutions which has been seen in Europe for many centuries, and will increase more and more, provided the teachers and inspectors do their duties. Nothing can prevent the increase of this blessed work, but the neglect of the instruments. Therefore be sure to watch over these with all care, that they may not grow weary in well doing. I shall be at Darlington, if God permit, on Tuesday and Wednesday, May the 4th and 5th; on Thursday at Durham, to preach at twelve o'clock at noon; and at Newcastle, between four and five in the afternoon. Grace be with you and yours. I am, dear Charles, your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN WESLEY."

Soon after this date a Sunday-school was established in Darlington, but it was conducted on grounds almost entirely secular, and was so disorderly that it was obliged to be abandoned. It was taught in the gallery of the chapel: for the purpose of teaching the children to write, desks were fixed to the back of each alternate seat; and the females had frequently to sit on forms on which the ink had been poured, perhaps not always by mere accident. After it had been discontinued for a few years, two young tradesmen who had been to London for improvement, and had been there connected with the Sunday-school in Golden-lane, wished on their return to re-establish it, but they were met by all but a storm of discouragement. A few young females, however, commenced a female school in a room in Skinnergate, and a few men re-commenced in the vestry a school for the boys. Partly from suffocation, and partly for want of books, they were just on the eve of a second failure, when the school was adopted by the two young men above-named, who each gave his guinea for books. This was in 1807. A room adjoining the girls' school in Skinnergate became vacant, and it was engaged for the boys. In two years they were able to publish a report of twelve pages, with an excellent code of rules and staff of



officers; and what was not so encouraging, but equally honourable, a debt of £18. 13s. 2d! There were thirty teachers, and two hundred and twenty scholars. Writing and arithmetic were taught on week nights. The names of the committee are worthy of being named: they were James Thompson, president; Henry Smith, treasurer; John Pomfret, secretary; and the other members, Robert Bland; James Ianson; and Christopher Dove, Jun. The school soon commended itself to public favour, and the debt was discharged, and it so increased that a larger room was needed, which was found in Blackwellgate. This also became too small, and it was removed into a large room in Pratt's Buildings, in the occupancy of Messrs. Pomfret and Middleton. In the year 1818, land was given for Wesleyan Sunday school-rooms, by Thomas Pickering Robinson, Esq., and made over to Wesleyan trustees. This brought the schools back into Skinnergate, where they still continue. These excellent institutions have had the countenance of our principal friends ever since 1807, when they were revived chiefly by the influence of Mr. Pomfret, who may be regarded as the father of Sunday schools in Darlington. By the trust-deed, the trustees were permitted to establish Day-schools under a separate trust, if they thought proper. This they did; and under an instrument of this kind, a boys' day-school is kept in the lower room, and the Wesleyans have a girls' day-school in the upper room. The Wesleyans occupy both on the sabbath. The total number of children in these Schools in Darlington, is upwards of four hundred and fifty; of teachers about eighty; the total number of children who have been admitted since their establishment is nearly five thousand: there are ten village schools in connexion with these, with upwards of four hundred scholars. There are excellent libraries attached to the schools in Skinnergate and Park-street for the use of the scholars. The school of industry for girls, which had been for some time closed, has recently been re-opened in the Skinnergate school-room, and is conducted on the Glasgow system, by an efficient teacher from the Glasgow training establishment. The number now on the books, is upwards of one hundred. A day-school is also connected with the Wesleyan chapel in Hurworth, in an excellent school-room built by George James, Esq.; and conducted, like the one in Darlington, by a trained teacher, from Mr. Stowe's establishment in Glasgow. The number of children on the books is upwards of fifty.



*Secondly.* The Darlington branch of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. The Wesleyan Missionaries first sent out were sent by the conference, to the then American Colonies, now the United States, in 1769. Those to the other Colonies of America, and the West Indies, in 1786. These were principally under the direction of Dr. Coke, as general superintendent for the conference. In connexion with these missions, Dr. Coke made several visits to Darlington, and preached in the old chapel. The first entry of contributions is in 1799; when the Darlington circuit included Stockton, Yarm, Hartlepool, and Bishop Auckland, and the villages adjacent to each. This first effort produced £2. 12. The amount has gone on\* increasing since that time, until in the Darlington circuit alone, with its present comparatively contracted limits, £283. 19s. 1d., was contributed during the year 1849.

We conclude with the "Benevolent and Strangers' Friend Society." The original society was established by Mr. Wesley in 1785. Its object is to supply relief to the sick poor of all denominations. The late excellent Queen Adelaide was the Patroness of the Parent Society up to the time of her death. Its annual income is between £4000. and £5000. The Darlington Society was commenced in 1815. It is conducted by a committee, and employs visitors, both male and female, in visiting the sick poor. These visitors are experienced christians, who not only convey the relief voted by the committee on representation of the cases, but administer such spiritual instructions as the objects of this charity may require, and engage in devotional exercise during their visits. The last report shews an expenditure of £28. 10s.

Thus have the different objects of Mr. Wesley's life and mission been carried out by his followers in Darlington, and his purely spiritual principles been preserved, "through good report and evil report," from his first sermon in 1761, to the present time; and, probably† beyond his expectations,—though they were always sanguine in reference to Darlington—their efforts have been crowned with success. Such an array of agency; such an amount of liberality; upwards of 700 members in society; and about 1000 scholars in our schools, is a cheering result of his small beginnings. We are not worshipping God very occasionally, in a thatched cottage with a mud floor; but regularly, in a large and "beautiful house," which will be re-

\* See Appendix, No. 9.

† See Appendix, No. 10.

membered through eternity, as the birth place of thousands of immortal souls. May these signs continue to be multiplied. "Amen; even so Lord Jesus."

The circumstances under which we have now to pursue our labours, as contrasted with those in which our fathers were placed, are such as to call for gratitude to God, and to encourage us in our work. The principal annoyances we have to endure, are in a few of the villages, from untutored youths, who are not sufficiently restrained in all cases, by either parental or legal authority. In a recent case in this circuit, it was found needful to seek redress; and the case is reported as follows, in "THE DARLINGTON AND STOCKTON TIMES," of March 9th, 1850.—

"CONVICTION FOR DISTURBING A CONGREGATION OF WESLEYAN METHODISTS.—The Wesleyan Methodists in Middleton-Tyas, have frequently been disturbed in their religious services, by a number of unruly youths, and after every other means had been tried in vain to secure the peaceful enjoyment of their religious services, they have been obliged to summon six of the transgressors against the Toleration Act before the magistrates. The hearing of the cases took place on Friday, the 1st instant, at Scorton, before the Rev. T. W. Morley, the Rev. E. Cust, and R. B. Wilson, Esq. It appeared that the parties had disturbed the congregation on the evenings of the 14th and 15th ultimo, by turning in a goat, and other similar annoyances. The Rev. G. Jackson, of Darlington, stated that he had admonished those who were in the habit of assembling to disturb the congregation, as he had passed them at the door of the place of worship, in the kindest manner; that he then procured "cautions" containing an extract from the Toleration Act; that on the 10th of December, he had exhibited one of these in the congregation, and shewed the penalty it threatened, which, if peace were not secured by other means, must be enforced: and that this "caution" had since been placed over the door of the place of worship, but it had been defaced and despised. The prosecutors however did not press for the penalty, they only wished an engagement from the parties to keep the peace for the future, and to pay the costs of the present proceedings. The Rev. T. W. Morley, the chairman, said, that but for the lenity of the prosecutors, the bench must have sentenced the parties to the house of correction, to take their trial at the quarter-sessions, where, without doubt, they would be convicted, and sentenced to pay the penalty of £40. each, or lie in the house of correction until the fines were paid. They had no more right to disturb the Wesleyans, or any other denomination, when assembled for worship in a licensed place than they had to disturb the worship of the established church; and if they were found transgressing thus in future, they should be sent to prison, to suffer the utmost penalty of the law. The unanimous sentence of the bench was, that within a week, they should pay the expenses, £2. 2s., or in the event of refusal, be committed to take their trial at the next quarter-sessions."

## APPENDIX.

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### No. 1, p. 3.

AN aged friend still living, well remembers that, in a northern town, the boys used to take the football to church, and as soon as the clergyman made his appearance after service, he would call out, "Now lads!" This was the watchword, the game commenced, and "the parson" was not the least active in the sport. One Sunday on arriving at the church, a weasel bolted out of a hole, and again found shelter in the church-yard wall. He was the first to commence pulling down the wall, and turn out the weasel to the dogs. This being done the hunt commenced, and the weasel was pursued over hedge and ditch. The chase proving more protracted than was expected, and the pastor remembering that he had left his flock in the church-yard, he sent back one of the boys to inform them that there would be no service. The flock were not much more spiritually-minded. Tailors and shoemakers, especially, made the church-yard a weekly mart for receiving orders and delivering goods; and it was a common thing to see a customer sitting on a tombstone to be measured for a pair of boots or shoes. This Nimrod—though far from being alone—might have sat to Southey as the original of the college-bred clergyman of those days. But thanks to methodism, under God, there has been a great change effected in the Establishment: a class of truly evangelical ministers has been raised up numbering above 2000, who are an honour to the church, and a blessing to the world.

### No. 2, p. 5.

"THIS pious and intrepid minister of the gospel was cited by Bishop Bonner to appear before him, charged with heretical preaching. Mr. G. expected nothing short of martyrdom, and bravely prepared for it, by ordering his house steward to provide him a long garment that he might make a decent appearance at the stake. He then set out for London, but luckily broke his leg on his journey, by this means his arrival was protracted; and in the mean time the Queen died, which freed him from all further apprehensions. The parish in which Mr. G. laboured lay in a tract of country on the border of Northumberland, at that time one of the most barbarous places in the north. Yet even there, where it was seldom safe to travel, he gained the affections of the people. One instance, though singular in itself, shews how he was respected. By the carelessness of his servants, his horses were one day stolen. The news was quickly propagated, and every one expressed his highest indignation at the fact. The thief was rejoicing over his prize, when, by the report of the country, he found whose horses he had taken. Terrified at what he had done, he instantly came trembling back, confessing the fact, returned the horses, and declared he believed the devil would have seized him directly, had he carried them off knowing whose they were."

Mr. Gilpin was a firm believer in the doctrine of a particular providence over God's people, and was fond of quoting Romans 8, 28; "All things work together for good to them that love God, &c." When he broke his

leg he was taunted by his opponents with this, but he still held fast his faith, and his detention until the death of Mary, supplied the moral of the disaster, as they supposed it to be. An extended and deeply interesting memoir of Mr. Gilpin, is published by Mr. Wesley, in the first volume of "The Arminian Magazine."

No. 3, p. 9.

OTHER honoured names may be mentioned in this connexion, as Matthew Lowes, who travelled from 1756—1795; William Hunter, 1767—1789; Robert Wilkinson, 1769—1781; and doubtless others unknown to us. And above all, the late Rev. Joseph Benson was born and brought to God in the Dales' Circuit. He was converted to God, at the place of his birth, near Temple-Sowerby, in the county of Westmorland, at the age of 18, in the year 1766, he soon commenced preaching, and as a local preacher preached in the Dales. As a christian, a scholar, a preacher, and a commentator, his praise is in all our churches. In 1798, and again in 1810, he was elected president of the conference. From 1803 to the time of his death in 1821, he was the editor of the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine. He died on the 2nd of March; the anniversary of the death of Mr. Wesley, just 30 years before.

No. 4, p. 11.

THE first time Barnard Castle occurs in the minutes of conference is in 1766, in connexion with a grant from the contingent-fund of £10. But this was towards the expenses of the *society*. Aldstone, Swaledale, Allendale, and Teesdale, all in the same circuit, applied for help in the same year, and to Allendale £5. was allowed, and to Teesdale £4.: so that £19. was allowed to the three places which received grants. Aldstone and Swaledale did not receive anything, though they applied for help. To Yarm, Stokesley, Thirsk, and Whitby, all in the same circuit, grants were made, to the amount of £30., the same year. Barnard Castle, however, made early and noble efforts for methodism. Of the Wear-dale society in 1772, Mr. Wesley says, in two respects this society has always been peculiarly remarkable: the one, they have been liberal in providing every thing needful for the preachers: the other, they have been careful to marry with each other, and that not for the sake of money, but virtue. Hence they assisted each other in bringing up their children: and God has eminently blessed them therein. For in most of their families, the greatest part of their children above ten years old, are converted to God. It was observed too, that the leaders were upright men and truly alive to God. And even when they had no preacher with them, they met every night for singing and prayer." (Ecclesiastical History, vol. 4, p. 269.)

No. 5, p. 11.

THE following are the accounts of the visits referred to in the text, from Mr. Wesley's Journals, vol. 1 pp. 429 and 447:—"Friday, October 28th, 1743. We rode from William Holmes' an Israelite indeed, from Epworth to Syke-House. Here I preached at ten, and hastened on to Leeds, from whence setting out early in the morning, I had hopes of reaching Wensleydale before it was dark; but it could not be: so in the

dusk of the evening, understanding that we had five or six miles still to ride, I thought it best to procure a guide. In less than an hour, it being extremely dark, I perceived we were got out of all road: we were in a large meadow near a river, and (it seemed to me) almost surrounded with water: I asked our guide, "do you know where you are?" and he honestly said "No." So we rode on as we could, till about eight we came to a little house, whence we were directed into a lane which led to Wensley. Sunday, 30th. Mr. Clayton read prayers, and I preached on, "What must I do to be saved?" I shewed in the plainest manner I could devise, "That mere outside religion would not bring us to heaven; that none could go thither without inward holiness, which was only obtained by faith." As I went back through the church-yard, many of the parish were in high debate, "what religion the preacher was of?" Some said he must be a quaker, others, an anabaptist: but at length one deeper learned than the rest, brought them all clearly over to his opinion, "that he was a presbyterian papist!"

No. 6, p. 11.

Mr. Wesley's first visit to Yarm is thus recorded:—"Tuesday, (August 16th, 1748,) "Soon after twelve, I preached near the market-place in Stockton, to a very large and very rude congregation; but they grew calmer and calmer, so that long before I had done, they were quiet and serious. Some gentlemen of Yarm earnestly desired, that I would preach there in the afternoon. I refused for some time, being weak and tired, so that I thought preaching thrice in the day, and riding fifty miles, would be work enough. But they would take no denial. So I went with them about two o'clock, and preached at three in the market place there, to a great company of people, gathered together at a few minutes' warning." Mr. Wesley visited Yarm again in July, 1757. He writes as follows:—

"Wednesday, 6th. At eleven I preached near the market place in Yarm. Many gentry were there, and all serious. I find in all these parts, a solid serious people, quite simple of heart, strangers to various opinions, and seeking only the faith that worketh by love; and most of the believers are waiting and longing for the fulness of the promises."

One of the gentlemen who gave the greatest encouragement to Mr. Wesley and his cause in Yarm, was Mr. George Merryweather, whose descendants of the third generation are connected with us. The first preaching-room in Yarm was a hayloft belonging to Mr. M., fitted up for the occasion. This we learn from a letter written many years afterwards, and still in the possession of the family, by Mr. Pawson, whose first appointment was the York circuit in 1762. He speaks of the fear and trembling with which he used to preach before Mr. M. in his hay loft in Yarm. This seems to accord with p. 30. See *Arm. Mag.*, vol. 2, p. 36.

Mr. Wesley was consulted by Mr. Merryweather on various subjects in "Law, Physic, and Divinity," and Mr. W's. letters still exist. The following shews the prosperity of the work.

"London, January 16th, 1758.

"My Dear Brother,—If the work of God does so increase in Yarm, we must not let the opportunity slip. Therefore let the travelling preacher be there either every Sunday evening, or at least every other Sunday.

"No person should be allowed to preach or exhort among our people, whose life is not holy and unblamable: nor any who asserts any thing

contrary to the gospel which we have received. And if he does not own his fault, and amend, he cannot be a leader any longer.

"Peace be with you all. I am, your affectionate brother,

"J. WESLEY."

The following is a reply to a letter from Mr. M. containing a bill for some books, and it strongly recommends a book which amongst modern medical practitioners, has excited a smile. But it must be remembered that formerly,\* the profession was not what now it is, and medical men were less abundant. The need of some small work on domestic medicine, prescribing such simples as were generally at hand, was more needful than in the present day. Mr. Wesley writes,

"Brentford, January 29th, 1760.

"My Dear Brother,—I received yours with the bill, a day or two ago. I wish you would everywhere recommend two books in particular. The Christian Pattern and the Primitive Physic. 'Tis great pity, that any methodist should be without them.

"I wonder brother Mather does not write to me. He should not forget his friends. I hope the gentleman with whom I breakfasted when at Yarm, has not forsaken you. Even the rich *may* enter into the kingdom: for with God all things are possible.

"See that you stir up the gift of God that is in you. What is our Lord's word to *you*? Let the dead bury their dead: but follow thou me!

"I am, your affectionate brother,

J. WESLEY."

On his return from the north in the following year, Mr. Wesley wrote,

"Newcastle-upon-Tyne, June 7th, 1761.

"My Dear Brother,—I had allotted two nights for Yarm: but by the advice of our brethren here, I have made a little alteration in my plan. On Wednesday and Thursday the 18th instant, I am to be at Stockton. On Friday evening and Saturday noon, I purpose (with God's leave,) to preach at Yarm. On Saturday evening I am to be at Hutton Rudby, which is nearer the centre of our societies. I am,

"Your affectionate brother,

J. WESLEY."

The year 1763 was an important year for Yarm. The old hayloft was superseded by the chapel which Mr. W. considered as a model, and which, with pews and a gallery since introduced, is still in use. The friends were wishful that Mr. P. Jaco should open it, and a correspondence took place between Mr. Merryweather and Mr. Jaco on the subject. Mr. Jaco referred them to Mr. W., and the following letter contains his reply.

"London, October 5th, 1763.

"My Dear Brother,—Your letter was sent to Bristol: but I had left Bristol before it came. I can have no objection to Mr. Jaco's coming to Yarm, to open the house. But I suppose he cannot stay long. He will be wanted again in his own circuit.

"It is strange, that the number of hearers should decrease, if you have regular preaching. I hope the morning preaching is never omitted. If it be every thing will droop.

"What relates to the account, I will give Mr. Franks. Probably he will find were the mistake lies. O! be in earnest.

"I am, your affectionate brother.

J. WESLEY."

In the following year, April 24th, Mr. Wesley visited Yarm, and he writes as follows in his journal:—

\* See Macanlay's History of England, vol. 1, pp. 430, 439.

"I preached about noon at Potto, and in the evening at the new house at Yarm, by far the most elegant in England. A large congregation attended at five in the morning, and seemed to be just ripe for the exhortation, 'Let us go on unto perfection.' I had indeed the satisfaction of finding most of the believers here athirst for full salvation."

The preceding letter expresses very strongly, Mr. Wesley's conviction of the importance of "five o'clock preaching," as it was called; and that this has not been continued is regarded by a few still, as both a means and a proof of a decline in methodism. But we believe that all that this proves is, a change in the habits of the people. Mr. Wesley regarded late hours at night, and early rising, to be incompatible; and the change in England in these respects since his days, is so great, that, there is the greatest difficulty for the working-classes to find an hour in the evening to attend the week-night services, and late hours have become general. The circuits have been altered, and the town societies and connexional institutions have been so increased, that the modern preachers cannot go a round, and sleep where they have preached. They must return home, and consequently spend much time on the roads which their predecessors spent in their beds. It was with difficulty Mr. Wesley kept up the early services in his day, and in the altered circumstances of both the preachers and the people, an attempt to revive them must be a failure. Complaints therefore may do harm, but they can do no good. The wisdom of all is piously to enjoy the means they have, and zealously to work the institutions which methodism has originated, and they will both enjoy and witness abundant prosperity. For "getting good and doing good," the means enjoyed by our fathers, were as nothing compared with what are enjoyed by their children.

The following letters are worthy of perusal:—

"Newcastle-upon-Tyne, May 7th, 1764.

"My Dear Brother, — I thank you for the receipts. There is nothing more sure than that God is able and willing to give always what he gives once. And it is most certainly his design that whatever he has given you, should abide with you for ever. But this can only be by simple faith. In this reasoning is good for nothing. See that both of you be as little children. Your help is laid up above, in the hands of him who loves you. Look unto him, and receive what you want. Believe yourselves to heaven.

"Your affectionate brother, J. WESLEY"

At the conference of 1767, the connexion was in debt to the amount of £11,338. In the month of November, a gentleman wrote to Mr. Wesley to propose that an effort should be made to raise the amount in two years, by six classes of subscribers of one thousand each, each individual of each class, paying on a graduated scale varying from "two guineas to a quarter of a guinea." This was to raise £12,600. On the 24th of November, 1767, Mr. Wesley issued a circular, in print, one of which was signed by him, and sent to Mr. Merryweather, with the following line also added, "I shall expect a line from you." This he had and the following is his reply.

"London, December 28th, 1767.

"My Dear Brother,—I thank Mr. Waldy and you for your generous assistance. It seems the time is come. But John Fenwick writes from Newcastle, "we are all here of opinion that it should be done at once. And we think that the debt may be paid off in one year: only let us set about it in faith. I will give £25., Mr. Davison will give £25., Jo. Morrison £25., Miss Dales £50." Very well, this will not interfere. Some may give at once; some quarterly; some yearly: you will encourage your neigh-



bours all you can. I am with love to S. Merryweather, Your affectionate brother,  
 "J. WESLEY."

At the conference of 1768, one of the Yarm preachers was expelled, but it would seem still resolved to preach. Mr. M. wrote to Mr. W. who, it appears thought the case "so notorious" that much trouble was needless, He replied,

"Bristol, September 26th, 1768.

"My Dear Brother, — I have appointed Richard Boardman to supply (for the present at least) in the place of Jacob Rowell. I desire J. H. may preach at Yarm no more. Quietly let him sink into nothing. And the less he preaches at other places the better, till he comes again to his senses. Indeed if any thing of so notorious a kind occurs, I will thank any steward for preventing such a preacher from doing any more hurt, till he has an answer from me. I am with love to S. Merryweather,

"Your affectionate brother, J. WESLEY."

The following is on a subject on which Mr. W. had evidently been consulted:—

"Lewisham, December 10th, 1768.

"My Dear Brother,—"The matter is short. All things in divine worship must be "done decently and in order." Two must never pray at the same time, nor one interrupt another.

"Alice B. must take advice, or the society must be warned to keep away from her. These things are the very things which were the beginning of poor George Bell's fall. I am with love to S. Merryweather,

"Your affectionate brother, J. WESLEY."

No. 7, p. 19.

In 1770, John Nelson was sent to Yarm, but it would seem he did not go very willingly. In reply to a letter from Mr. M., evidently on the subject of the appointments, Mr. Wesley writes as follows:—

"Nottingham, (dated in pencil, 1770.)

"My Dear Brother,—I have the credit of stationing the preachers. But many of them go where they *will* for all me. For instance. I have marked down James Oddie and John Nelson for Yarm for the coming year. Yet I am not certain either of them will come. They can give twenty reasons for going elsewhere. Mr. N. *says* he must go to London. 'Tis certain he has a mind to be there. Therefore so it must be: for you know, a man of fortune is master of his own motions. I am with love to S. Merryweather, and Mr. Waldy, Your affectionate brother, J. WESLEY."

Mr. Oddie went to Yarm, however, as a supernumerary, and Mr. Nelson, in spite of his twenty reasons to the contrary, went for effective service. His simple intention to keep the great blessing of regeneration before his congregations, is strikingly illustrated by an anecdote supplied by a descendant of Mr. M. Mr. Nelson came to Darlington to preach, and on two visits he had preached on "Ye must be born again." Fearing a third edition, one who could take the liberty, said, "Now, John, let us have a new text this visit: you will remember that, the two last times you have preached from 'Ye must be born again.'" "Yes," was the reply, "and that never went forth without a blessing, and you shall have it again." And so it was: they were no doubt trebly blessed with, "Ye must be born again."



## No. 8, p. 25.

AN entry of this kind for a married man, whose wife was, according to the minutes of conference, to receive her allowances from Yarm, appears singular. Mr. T. Johnson, whose wife is not named, and who was eleven years Mr. Nelson's junior, was the superintendent, and doubtless resided there. Mr. N. most probably resided elsewhere, and was now only on a visit to Yarm.

## No. 9, p. 47.

THE first effort for Missions was made when the circuit included the range of country from Stockton to \*Bishop-Auckland. This was in 1799; and it may be interesting to the different places to give the names and amounts up to 1805, when the collections became general.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1799, Stockton Subscriptions.....	1	16	3			
Darlington Do. ....	0	15	9			
				2	12	0
1800, Stockton public Collection .....	1	19	0			
" Subscription Mrs. Walker	0	10	6			
Darlington Public Collection.....	2	13	6			
				5	3	0
1801, Stockton Public Collection .....	2	2	0			
Hutton Do. ....	1	4	7			
Yarm Do. ....	1	9	9½			
Darlington Do. ....	2	7	4			
				7	3	8½
1802, Darlington West India Collection..				2	14	1½
" Nov. 14th, for Dr. Coke				5	8	3
1803, " West India Collection..				3	7	6
1804, Potto .....	0	5	6			
Hutton.....	0	13	6¼			
Yarm.....	0	15	0			
Stockton .....	2	1	0			
Darlington .....	3	8	0			
Greatham .....	0	7	6			
Norton .....	0	6	6			
Seamoor .....	0	3	9¼			
Thorpe.....	0	6	6			
				8	7	3½
1805, Mr. Warrener, a returned W. India Missionary was appointed, and the collections were general .....				21	0	0

£55 15 10½

The annual amounts varied but little from the last sum until the year 1818, when the branch society was formed, and nearly £100. was raised; and in fifty years, from 1799 to 1848 inclusive, the Darlington circuit contributed to the noble cause of foreign missions, the sum of £7536. 10s. 8d. During

\* "Given up this year to Barnard Castle, that the people might have Sunday preaching." (Old Circuit Book.)

the first sixteen years of this period, Stockton and the places connected with it, and also Bishop-Auckland, were included in the circuit, and contributed their quota; but during this entire period, the whole amount from what is now divided into three circuits, was only about £270. From the report of the parent society for 1848, (the latest published) it appears that, the amounts collected on the same ground were as follows:—

	£.	s.	d.
Darlington .....	265	16	1
Stockton.....	435	7	2
Bishop-Auckland .....	164	7	2
Total	£865	10	5

## No. 10, p. 47.

In the year 1815, when Stockton was separated from Darlington, Darlington returned eleven country places: now the circuit embraces twenty-five; viz. \*Cockerton, \*Hurworth, Croft, Dalton, Middleton-one-row, Neasham, \*North Cowton, Middleton Tyas, \*Melsonby, \*Barton, Morden, \*Sedgefield, Bradbury, Redworth, \*Heighington, Woodham, \*Aycliffe, Bolam, Summerhouse, \*Piercebridge, \*Gainford, \*High Coniscliffe, \*Haughton, Sadberge, and Stapleton. The asterisk indicates that there is a chapel at the place where it is prefixed.

It is scarcely needful to say that, on the sabbaths, these places are principally supplied by local preachers; and it is only due to those in the Darlington circuit to say, that a more zealous, laborious, faithful, and useful class of such labourers, cannot easily be found. Including six exhorters, and two on trial, they number thirty-six.

Since 1815, the following have been the conference appointments for Darlington:—

1815, J. Kershaw, J. Beckwith. 1816, J. Kershaw, R. Emmet. 1817, J. Kershaw, T. Stead. 1818, J. Marsden, T. Stead. 1819, J. Marsden, R. Bentham. 1820, R. Pilter, R. Bentham. 1821, R. Pilter, T. Hamer. 1822, R. Pilter, T. Hamer. 1823, D. Rogers, J. Miller. 1824, A. B. Seckerson, J. Johnson; \*R. Miller, Supernumerary. 1825, A. B. Seckerson, J. Johnson. 1826, W. Leach, J. Burgess, Jun.; \*J. Johnson, Supernumerary. 1827, W. Leach, J. Burgess, Jun. (Darlington made the head of a District, W. Leach, Chairman.) 1828, W. Towers, W. Binning; W. Towers, Chairman. 1829, The same. 1830, The same. 1831, W. Smith, 2nd, T. L. Hodgson; W. Smith, Chairman. 1832, The same, with J. Johnson, Supernumerary. 1833, S. Crompton, W. Armson. 1834, The same. 1835, W. Woolsey, J. Catton. 1836, W. Woolsey, J. Catton, J. Nicholson. 1837, W. Woolsey, John Burgess, R. Cooke. 1838, J. Rayner, J. Burgess, R. Cooke. 1839, J. Rayner, J. Burgess, T. Kent. 1840, J. Rayner, E. Brice, T. Kent; J. Rayner, Chairman. 1841, R. Day, E. Brice, Walter Coates. 1842, R. Day, W. Webb, 2nd. 1843, The same. 1844, J. Hunt, W. Webb. 1845, J. Hunt, H. Richardson; W. Webb, Supernumerary. 1846, R. Heys, J. Hobkirk. 1847, The same; R. Heys, Chairman. 1848, G. Jackson, L. H. Wiseman; G. Jackson, Chairman. 1849, The same.

\* Mr. Johnson continued a Supernumerary in the Darlington circuit until 1827; and Mr. Miller until 1829.

The mention, as above, of more than double the number of country places, with only the same number of ministers as at the division of the circuit, in 1815, very naturally leads to the consideration of the increase of labour, travelling and expense, incurred by the modern subdivision of our country societies, and the consequent abstraction of the labours of the modern preachers from the pastoral work required by the large societies in the towns. This is not peculiar to Darlington, but is becoming all but universal. The expense for horse-hire more than exhausts the resources of such very small societies as this system originates; it so taxes the strength of the ministers as very seriously injures their health; and it causes complaints of neglect both in the towns and in the country, which shew that it does not give satisfaction to any body. Almost every country journey consumes six or eight hours of the ministers' time; and when they have to walk, their strength and time are spent on the roads, instead of in the pulpit and in pastoral labour. How common it is to hear our friends, in the same breath complain, of the neglect of their ministers, and of their health being unequal to the work in the modern circuits. But is there not a cause? Again and again, we have heard our aged ministers affirm, that their early circuits were far less laborious than their modern ones; and this is confirmed both by facts and figures. Next to the evidences of real conversion, consistency of character, and a conviction of a call to the ministry, there is nothing which the modern conferences more imperatively require of candidates, than a sound constitution; and we have sometimes thought that if the poor dyspeptic Timothy, with his "often infirmities," were to offer himself, he could not be received. In a letter recently addressed by our president to the chairmen of districts, is the following injunction, with its painful reasons:—"The cases of failure of health amongst our junior ministers, have of late, been so numerous, as to require me to suggest to you that it has become highly important that special attention should be paid to the usual inquiries respecting the state of health of all future candidates." With incessant and exhausting toil before them, and in a very large majority of our circuits, with no other pecuniary prospect than that of a mere subsistence, the flower of our youth, at the call of God and his church, still cheerfully enter our ministry; a large proportion of them nobly offer themselves for our foreign missions; and not a few prematurely sacrifice their health or lives in this dangerous service. The demand for health in the candidates for our ministry, indeed, all but sinks their qualifications to one of mere physical ability: and yet what are the statistics of our "Auxiliary Fund?" which shew the proportion of casualties in our ministry from sickness and death. Why, for 918 ministers in full connexion in Great Britain, and 84 in Ireland—in all 1002—there are on the books of this fund, 215 supernumeraries, and 231 widows, making a total of 446? The original fund\* was established by Mr. Wesley as early as 1749, (see Minutes, Vol. i, p.

\* Since we gave the account of Mr. J. Hosmer, (p. 15 *et seq.*) we have discovered that in 1765, he was at Sunderland, and was one of the Treasurers of this fund. We have also seen a letter from him to Mr. Merryweather, of Yarm, just after the conference of 1768, dated "Port Isaac," (Cornwall;) from which it appears that, he was in a very feeble state of health, and only able to preach once on the Sabbath. This may have been the reason why, though Mr. Myles says he travelled from 1758-1770, his name does not appear on the stations. It appears he was not a chemist, but a medical man, and was eminent in his profession, in the city of York, after he ceased to travel. He and his sister are said to have been witnesses in the remarkable case of Elizabeth Hobson, and her name is mentioned in connexion with it, in Mr. Wesley's Journal, in May, 1768.

45.) and yet there are those who bear his name—though not in this circuit we believe—who are constantly complaining of the degeneracy of the modern Wesleyan ministers, and who would “stop the supplies” to a fund which is intended only very partially to supply the wants of 446 of such annuitants.

In conclusion we must say, and that very sincerely, that it is with extreme reluctance we have touched on those topics which have occasioned uneasiness in our connexion; and especially such as imply sinister imputations on the Wesleyan ministry. In this, however, we are only imitating the conduct of the apostles, against whom, similar imputations had been urged at Corinth. They had to say, “Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.” We would also observe that, these remarks or any others which appear to reflect on the kindness of the Wesleyans towards their ministers, only contemplate exceptions; and they are made—as we have remarked in the preface—merely for the purpose of “guarding the unwary amidst such discussions as are now obtruded upon us from every quarter, and are therefore unavoidable.” There are but few circuits where the same kindness is exercised towards the ministry—active or supernumerary—as in the Darlington circuit; but in the present state of things, more pains than heretofore must be taken with our friends, especially with the young, to prepare them for the rejection of those imputations of sinister motives, &c., so lavishly heaped upon their ministers, to the serious injury of their characters and usefulness. When these imputations come from those who are called Wesleyans, there is scriptural reason to fear, that they are the uncharitable fruits of spiritual declension. When the Galatians had been “bewitched” by factious men, and were evidently disposed to “stop the supplies,” St. Paul asked them, “Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? For I bear you record that if *it had been* possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.” And moreover, he enjoined, “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.”

THE END.

N. B. A few typographical errors have escaped correction, which the reader is requested to excuse. The following only is important:—Page 54, line 15 from the bottom, for Mr. N., read Mr. M——. It was not Mr. Nelson who “said he must go to London,” as the present reading implies.

